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THE

WORKS

OF

Samuel Johnſon, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION,

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

VOLUME THE TENTH.

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M DCC XCVI.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

SMITH.

EDMUND SMITH is one of thofe lucky writers who have, without much labour, attained high reputation, and who are mentioned with reverence rather for the poffeffion than the exertion of uncommon abilities.

Of his life little is known; and that little claims no praife but what can be given to intellectual excellence, feldom employed to any virtuous purpofe. His character, as given by Mr. Oldifworth, with all the partiality of friendfhip, which is faid by Dr. Burton to fhew "what fine things one man of parts can fay of another," and which, however, comprifes great part of what can be known of Mr. Smith, it is better to tranfcribe at once than to take by pieces. I fhall fubjoin fuch little memorials as accident has enabled me to collect.

Mr. EDMUND SMITH was the only fon of an eminent merchant, one Mr. Neale, by a daughter of the famous baron Lechmere. Some misfortunes of his father, which were foon followed by his death, were the occafion of the fon's being left very young

in the hands of a near relation (one who married Mr. Neale's ſiſter), whoſe name was Smith.

This gentleman and his lady treated him as their own child, and put him to Weſtminſter-ſchool under the care of Dr. Buſby; whence, after the loſs of his faithful and generous guardian (whoſe name he aſſumed and retained), he was removed to Chriſt-church in Oxford, and there by his aunt handſomely maintained till her death; after which he continued a member of that learned and ingenious ſociety till within five years of his own; though, ſome time before his leaving Chriſt-church, he was ſent for by his mother to Worceſter, and owned and acknowledged as her legitimate ſon; which had not been mentioned, but to wipe off the aſperſions that were ignorantly caſt by ſome on his birth. It is to be remembered, for our author's honour, that, when at Weſtminſter election he ſtood a candidate for one of the univerſities, he ſo ſignally diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his conſpicuous performances, that there aroſe no ſmall contention, between the repreſentative electors of Trinity-college in Cambridge and Chriſt-church in Oxon, which of thoſe two royal ſocieties ſhould adopt him as their own. But the electors of Trinity-college having the preference of choice that year, they reſolutely elected him; who yet, being invited at the ſame time to Chriſt-church, choſe to accept of a ſtudentſhip there. Mr. Smith's perfections, as well natural as acquired, ſeem to have been formed upon Horace's plan; who ſays, in his "Art of "Poetry:"

"Ego

" —Ego nec ſtudium ſine divite venâ,
" Nec rude quid proſit video ingenium: alterius ſic
" Altera poſcit opem res, & conjurat amice."

He was endowed by Nature with all thoſe excellent and neceſſary qualifications which are previous to the accompliſhment of a great man. His memory was large and tenacious, yet by a *curious felicity chiefly* ſuſceptible of the fineſt impreſſions it received from the beſt authors he read, which it always preſerved in their primitive ſtrength and amiable order.

He had a quickneſs of apprehenſion, and vivacity of underſtanding, which eaſily took-in and ſurmounted the moſt ſubtle and knotty parts of mathematicks and metaphyſicks. His wit was prompt and flowing, yet ſolid and piercing; his taſte delicate, his head clear, and his way of expreſſing his thoughts perſpicuous and engaging. I ſhall ſay nothing of his perſon, which yet was ſo well *turned*, that no neglect of himſelf in his dreſs could render it diſagreeable; inſomuch that the fair ſex, who obſerved and eſteemed him, at once commended and reproved him by the name of the *handſome* ſloven. An eager but generous and noble emulation grew up with him; which (as it were a rational ſort of inſtinct) puſhed him upon ſtriving to excel in every art and ſcience that could make him a credit to his college, and that college the ornament of the moſt learned and polite univerſity; and it was his happineſs to have ſeveral contemporaries and fellow-ſtudents who exerciſed and excited this virtue in themſelves and others, thereby becoming ſo deſerv-

edly in favour with this age, and ſo good a proof of its nice diſcernment. His judgement, naturally good, ſoon ripened into an exquiſite fineneſs and diſtinguiſhing ſagacity, which as it was active and buſy, ſo it was vigorous and manly, keeping even paces with a rich and ſtrong imagination, always upon the wing, and never tired with aſpiring. Hence it was, that, though he writ as young as Cowley, he had no puerilities; and his earlieſt productions were ſo far from having any thing in them mean and trifling, that, like the junior compoſitions of Mr. Stepney, they may make grey authors bluſh. There are many of his firſt eſſays in oratory, in epigram, elegy, and epique, ſtill handed about the univerſity in manuſcript, which ſhew a maſterly hand; and, though maimed and injured by frequent tranſcribing, make their way into our moſt celebrated miſcellanies, where they ſhine with uncommon luſtre. Beſides thoſe verſes in the Oxford books, which he could not help ſetting his name to, ſeveral of his compoſitions came abroad under other names, which his own ſingular modeſty, and faithful ſilence, ſtrove in vain to conceal. The Encœnia and publick Collections of the Univerſity upon State Subjects were never in ſuch eſteem, either for elegy and congratulation, as when he contributed moſt largely to them; and it was natural for thoſe, who knew his peculiar way of writing, to turn to his ſhare in the work, as by far the moſt reliſhing part of the entertainment. As his parts were extraordinary, ſo he well knew how to improve them; and not only to poliſh the diamond, but enchaſe it in the moſt ſolid and durable metal. Though he was an academick the greateſt

part

part of his life, yet he contracted no ſourneſs of temper, no ſpice of pedantry, no itch of diſputation, or obſtinate contention for the old or new philoſophy, no aſſuming way of dictating to others, which are faults (though excuſable) which ſome are inſenſibly led into, who are conſtrained to dwell long within the walls of a private college. His converſation was pleaſant and inſtructive; and what Horace ſaid of Plotius, Varius, and Virgil, might juſtly be applied to him:

> "Nil ego contulerim jucundo ſanus Amico."
> Sat. v. l. 1.

As correct a writer as he was in his moſt elaborate pieces, he read the works of others with candour, and reſerved his greateſt ſeverity for his own compoſitions; being readier to cheriſh and advance, than damp or depreſs, a riſing genius, and as patient of being excelled himſelf (if any could excel him) as induſtrious to excel others.

'Twere to be wiſhed he had confined himſelf to a particular profeſſion, who was capable of ſurpaſſing in any; but, in this, his want of application was in a great meaſure owing to his want of due encouragement.

He paſſed through the exerciſes of the college and univerſity with unuſual applauſe; and though he often ſuffered his friends to call him off from his retirements, and to lengthen out thoſe jovial avocations, yet his return to his ſtudies were ſo much the more paſſionate, and his intention upon thoſe refined pleaſures of reading and thinking ſo vehement (to which his facetious and unbended intervals bore no

proportion), that the habit grew upon him, and the ſeries of meditation and reflection being kept up whole weeks together, he could better ſort his ideas, and take in the ſundry parts of a ſcience at one view, without interruption or confuſion. Some indeed of his acquaintance, who were pleaſed to diſtinguiſh between the wit and the ſcholar, extolled him altogether on the account of theſe titles; but others, who knew him better, could not forbear doing him juſtice as a prodigy in both kinds. He had ſignalized himſelf, in the ſchools, as a philoſopher and polemick of extenſive knowledge and deep penetration; and went through all the courſes with a wiſe regard to the dignity and importance of each ſcience. I remember him in the Divinity-ſchool reſponding and diſputing with a perſpicuous energy, a ready exactneſs, and commanding force of argument, when Dr. Jane worthily preſided in the chair; whoſe condeſcending and diſintereſted commendation of him gave him ſuch a reputation as ſilenced the envious malice of his enemies, who durſt not contradict the approbation of ſo profound a maſter in theology. None of thoſe ſelf-ſufficient creatures, who have either trifled with philoſophy, by attempting to ridicule it, or have encumbered it with novel terms and burdenſome explanations, underſtood its real weight and purity half ſo well as Mr. Smith. He was too diſcerning to allow of the character of unprofitable, rugged, and abſtruſe, which ſome ſuperficial ſcioliſts (ſo very ſmooth and polite as to admit of no impreſſion), either out of an unthinking indolence, or an ill-grounded prejudice, had affixed to this ſort of ſtudies. He knew the thorny terms of philoſophy

ſerved

ferved well to fence-in the true doctrines of religion; and looked upon fchool-divinity as upon a rough but well-wrought army, which might at once adorn and defend the Chriftian hero, and equip him for the combat.

Mr. Smith had a long and perfect intimacy with all the Greek and Latin Claffìcks; with whom he had carefully compared whatever was worth perufing in the French, Spanifh, and Italian (to which languages he was no ftranger), and in all the celebrated writers of his own country. But then, according to the curious obfervation of the late Earl of Shaftefbury, he kept the poet in awe by regular criticifm; and, as it were, married the two arts for their mutual fupport and improvement. There was not a tract of credit, upon that fubject, which he had not diligently examined, from Ariftotle down to Hedelin and Boffu; fo that, having each rule conftantly before him, he could carry the art through every poem, and at once point out the graces and deformities. By this means he feemed to read with a defign to correct, as well as imitate.

Being thus prepared, he could not but tafte every little delicacy that was fet before him; though it was impoffible for him at the fame time to be fed and nourifhed with any thing but what was fubftantial and lafting. He confidered the ancients and moderns not as parties or rivals for fame, but as Architects upon one and the fame plan, the Art of Poetry; according to which he judged, approved, and blamed, without flattery or detraction. If he did not always commend the compofitions of others, it was not ill-nature (which was not in his temper); but

ſtrict juſtice would not let him call a few flowers ſet in ranks, a glib meaſure, and ſo many couplets, by the name of poetry: he was of Ben Jonſon's opinion, who could not admire

> — Verſes as ſmooth and ſoft as cream,
> In which there was neither depth nor ſtream.

And therefore, though his want of complaiſance for ſome men's overbearing vanity made him enemies, yet the better part of mankind were obliged by the freedom of his reflections.

His Bodleian Speech, though taken from a remote and imperfect copy, hath ſhewn the world how great a maſter he was of the Ciceronian eloquence, mixed with the conciſeneſs and force of Demoſthenes, the elegant and moving turns of Pliny, and the acute and wiſe reflections of Tacitus.

Since Temple and Roſcommon, no man underſtood Horace better, eſpecially as to his happy diction, rolling numbers, beautiful imagery, and alternate mixture of the ſoft and the ſublime. This endeared Dr. Hannes's odes to him, the fineſt genius for Latin lyrick ſince the Auguſtan Age. His friend Mr. Philips's ode to Mr. St. John (late Lord Bolingbroke), after the manner of Horace's Luſory or Amatorian Odes, is certainly a maſter-piece; but Mr. Smith's Pocockius is of the ſublimer kind, though, like Waller's writings upon Oliver Cromwell, it wants not the moſt delicate and ſurpriſing turns peculiar to the perſon praiſed. I do not remember to have ſeen any thing like it in Dr. Bathurſt, who had made ſome attempts this way with applauſe. He was an excellent judge of humanity; and ſo good

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an hiſtorian, that in familiar diſcourſe he would talk over the moſt memorable facts in antiquity, the lives, actions, and characters, of celebrated men, with amazing facility and accuracy. As he had thoroughly read and digeſted Thuanus's works, ſo he was able to copy after him; and his talent in this kind was ſo well known and allowed, that he had been ſingled out by ſome great men to write a hiſtory; which it was for their intereſt to have done with the utmoſt art and dexterity. I ſhall not mention for what reaſons this deſign was dropped, though they are very much to Mr. Smith's honour. The truth is, and I ſpeak it before living witneſſes, whilſt an agreeable company could fix him upon a ſubject of uſeful literature, nobody ſhone to greater advantage; he ſeemed to be that Memmius whom Lucretius ſpeaks of:

> —Quem tu, Dea, tempore in omni
> Omnibus ornatum voluiſti excellere rebus.

His works are not many, and thoſe ſcattered up and down in Miſcellanies and Collections, being wreſted from him by his friends with great difficulty and reluctance. All of them together make but a ſmall part of that much greater body which lies diſperſed in the poſſeſſion of numerous acquaintance; and cannot perhaps be made intire, without great injuſtice to him, becauſe few of them had his laſt hand, and the tranſcriber was often obliged to take the liberties of a friend. His condolence for the death of Mr. Philips is full of the nobleſt beauties, and hath done juſtice to the aſhes of that ſecond Milton, whoſe writings will laſt as long as the Engliſh

liſh language, generoſity, and valour. For him Mr. Smith had contracted a perfect friendſhip; a paſſion he was moſt ſuſceptible of, and whoſe laws he looked upon as ſacred and inviolable.

Every ſubject that paſſed under his pen had all the life, proportion, and embelliſhments beſtowed on it, which an exquiſite ſkill, a warm imagination, and a cool judgement, poſſibly could beſtow on it. The epique, lyrick, elegiac, every ſort of poetry he touched upon (and he had touched upon a great variety), was raiſed to its proper height, and the differences between each of them obſerved with a judicious accuracy. We ſaw the old rules and new beauties placed in admirable order by each other; and there was a predominant fancy and ſpirit of his own infuſed, ſuperior to what ſome draw off from the ancients, or from poeſies here and there culled out of the moderns, by a painful induſtry and ſervile imitation. His contrivances were adroit and magnificent; his images lively and adequate; his ſentiments charming and majeſtick; his expreſſions natural and bold; his numbers various and ſounding; and that enameled mixture of claſſical wit, which, without redundance and affectation, ſparkled through his writings, and were no leſs pertinent and agreeable.

His *Phædra* is a conſummate tragedy, and the ſucceſs of it was as great as the moſt ſanguine expectations of his friends could promiſe or foreſee. The number of nights, and the common method of filling the houſe, are not always the ſureſt marks of judging what encouragement a play meets with: but the generoſity of all the perſons of a refined taſte

about

about town was remarkable on this occaſion; and it muſt not be forgotten how zealouſly Mr. Addiſon eſpouſed his intereſt, with all the elegant judgement and diffuſive good-nature for which that accompliſhed gentleman and author is ſo juſtly valued by mankind. But as to *Phædra*, ſhe has certainly made a finer figure under Mr. Smith's conduct, upon the Engliſh ſtage,* than either in Rome or Athens; and if ſhe excels the Greek and Latin *Phædra*, I need not ſay ſhe ſurpaſſes the French one, though embelliſhed with whatever regular beauties and moving ſoftneſs Racine himſelf could give her.

No man had a juſter notion of the difficulty of compoſing than Mr. Smith; and he ſometimes would create greater difficuties than he had reaſon to apprehend. Writing with eaſe, what (as Mr. Wycherley ſpeaks) may be eaſily written, moved his indignation. When he was writing upon a ſubject, he would ſeriouſly conſider what Demoſthenes, Homer, Virgil, or Horace, if alive, would ſay upon that occaſion, which whetted him to exceed himſelf as well as others. Nevertheleſs, he could not, or would not, finiſh ſeveral ſubjects he undertook; which may be imputed either to the briſkneſs of his fancy, ſtill hunting after new matter, or to an occaſional indolence, which ſpleen and laſſitude brought upon him, which, of all his foibles, the world was leaſt inclined to forgive. That this was not owing to conceit or vanity, or a fulneſs of himſelf (a frailty which has been imputed to no leſs men than Shakſpeare and Jonſon), is clear from hence; becauſe he left his works to the entire diſpoſal of his friends, whoſe moſt rigorous cenſures he even courted and ſolicited,

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ſubmitting to their animadverſions, and the freedom they took with them, with an unreſerved and prudent reſignation.

I have ſeen ſketches and rough draughts of ſome poems to be deſigned, ſet out analytically; wherein the fable, ſtructure, and connexion, the images, incidents, moral, epiſodes, and a great variety of ornaments, were ſo finely laid out, ſo well fitted to the rules of art, and ſquared ſo exactly to the precedents of the ancients, that I have often looked on theſe poetical elements with the ſame concern with which curious men are affected at the ſight of the moſt entertaining remains and ruins of an antique figure or building. Thoſe fragments of the learned, which ſome men have been ſo proud of their pains in collecting, are uſeleſs rarities, without form and without life, when compared with theſe embryos which wanted not ſpirit enough to preſerve them; ſo that I cannot help thinking, that, if ſome of them were to come abroad, they would be as highly valued by the poets, as the ſketches of Julio and Titian are by the painters; though there is nothing in them but a few outlines, as to the deſign and proportion.

It muſt be confeſſed, that Mr. Smith had ſome defects in his conduct, which thoſe are moſt apt to remember who could imitate him in nothing elſe. His freedom with himſelf drew ſeverer acknowledgements from him than all the malice he ever provoked was capable of advancing, and he did not ſcruple to give even his misfortunes the hard name of faults; but, if the world had half his good-nature, all the ſhady parts would be entirely ſtruck out of his character.

A man, who, under poverty, calamities, and diſappointments, could make ſo many friends, and thoſe ſo truly valuable, muſt have juſt and noble ideas of the paſſion of friendſhip, in the ſucceſs of which conſiſted the greateſt, if not the only, happineſs of his life. He knew very well what was due to his birth though Fortune threw him ſhort of it in every other circumſtance of life. He avoided making any, though perhaps reaſonable, complaints of her diſpenſations, under which he had honour enough to be eaſy, without touching the favours ſhe flung in his way when offered to him at a price of a more durable reputation. He took care to have no dealings with mankind, in which he could not be juſt; and he deſired to be at no other expence in his pretenſions than that of intrinſick merit, which was the only burthen and reproach he ever brought upon his friends. He could ſay, as Horace did of himſelf, what I never yet ſaw tranſlated:

> "Meo ſum pauper in ære."

At his coming to town, no man was more ſurrounded by all thoſe who really had or pretended to wit, or more courted by the great men, who had then a power and opportunity of encouraging arts and ſciences, and gave proofs of their fondneſs for the name of Patron in many inſtances, which will ever be remembered to their glory. Mr. Smith's character grew upon his friends by intimacy, and out-went the ſtrongeſt prepoſſeſſions which had been conceived in his favour. Whatever quarrel a few four creatures, whoſe obſcurity is their happineſs, may poſſibly have to the age; yet amidſt a ſtudied

neglect,

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S

neglect, and total disuse of all those ceremonial attendances, fashionable equipments, and external recommendations, which are thought necessary introductions into the *grande monde*, this gentleman was so happy as still to please; and whilst the rich, the gay, the noble, and honourable, saw how much he excelled in wit and learning, they easily forgave him all other differences. Hence it was that both his acquaintance and retirements were his own free choice. What Mr. Prior observes upon a very great character was true of him, *that most of his faults brought their excuse with them.*

Those who blamed him most understood him least, it being the custom of the vulgar to charge an excess upon the most complaisant, and to form a character by the morals of a few, who have sometimes spoiled an hour or two in good company. Where only fortune is wanting to make a great name, that single exception can never pass upon the best judges and most equitable observers of mankind; and when the time comes for the world to spare their pity, we may justly enlarge our demands upon them for their admiration.

Some few years before his death, he had engaged himself in several considerable undertakings; in all which he had prepared the world to expect mighty things from him. I have seen about ten sheets of his *English Pindar*, which exceeded any thing of that kind I could ever hope for in our own language. He had drawn out a plan of a tragedy of the *Lady Jane Grey*, and had gone through several scenes of it. But he could not well have bequeathed that work to better hands than where, I hear, it is at present

ſent lodged; and the bare mention of two ſuch names may juſtify the largeſt expectations, and is ſufficient to make the town an agreeable invitation.

His greateſt and nobleſt undertaking was *Longinus.* He had finiſhed an entire tranſlation of the *Sublime*, which he ſent to the reverend Mr. Richard Parker, a friend of his, late of Merton College, an exact critick in the Greek tongue, from whom it came to my hands. The French verſion of Monſieur Boileau, though truly valuable, was far ſhort of it. He propoſed a large addition to this work, of notes and obſervations of his own, with an entire ſyſtem of the Art of Poetry, in three books, under the titles of *Thought*, *Diction*, and *Figure*. I ſaw the laſt of theſe perfect, and in a fair copy, in which he ſhewed prodigious judgement and reading; and particularly had reformed the Art of Rhetorick, by reducing that vaſt and confuſed heap of terms, with which a long ſucceſſion of pedants had encumbered the world, to a very narrow compaſs, comprehending all that was uſeful and ornamental in poetry. Under each head and chapter, he intended to make remarks upon all the ancients and moderns, the Greek, Latin, Engliſh, French, Spaniſh, and Italian poets, and to note their ſeveral beauties and defects.

What remains of his works is left, as I am informed, in the hands of men of worth and judgement, who loved him. It cannot be ſuppoſed they would ſuppreſs any thing that was his, but out of reſpect to his memory, and for want of proper hands to finiſh what ſo great a genius had begun.

SUCH is the declamation of Oldiſworth, written while his admiration was yet freſh, and his kindneſs warm; and therefore ſuch as, without any criminal purpoſe of deceiving, ſhews a ſtrong deſire to make the moſt of all favourable truth. I cannot much commend the performance. The praiſe is often indiſtinct, and the ſentences are loaded with words of more pomp than uſe. There is little, however, that can be contradicted, even when a plainer tale comes to be told.

EDMUND NEALE, known by the name of Smith, was born at Handley, the ſeat of the Lechmeres, in Worceſterſhire. The year of his birth is uncertain*.

He was educated at Weſtminſter. It is known to have been the practice of Dr. Buſby to detain thoſe youth long at ſchool, of whom he had formed the higheſt expectations. Smith took his maſter's degree on the 8th of July, 1696; he therefore was probably admitted into the univerſity in 1689, when we may ſuppoſe him twenty years old.

His reputation for literature in his college was ſuch as has been told; but the indecency and licentiouſneſs of his behaviour drew upon him, Dec. 24, 1694, while he was yet only Bachelor, a public admonition, entered upon record, in order to his expulſion. Of this reproof the effect is not known. He was probably leſs notorious. At Oxford, as we all know, much will be forgiven to literary merit;

* By his epitaph he appears to have been 42 years old when he died. He was conſequently born in the year 1668. R.

and

and of that he had exhibited ſufficient evidence by his excellent ode on the death of the great Orientaliſt, Dr. Pocock, who died in 1691, and whoſe praiſe muſt have been written by Smith when he had been but two years in the univerſity.

This ode, which cloſed the ſecond volume of the *Muſæ Anglicanæ*, though perhaps ſome objections may be made to its Latinity, is by far the beſt Lyrick compoſition in that collection; nor do I know where to find it equalled among the modern writers. It expreſſes, with great felicity, images not claſſical in claſſical diction: its digreſſions and returns have been deſervedly recommended by Trapp as models for imitation.

He had ſeveral imitations from Cowley:

> Teſtitur hinc tot ſermo coloribus
> Quot tu, Pococki, diſſimilis tui
> Orator effers, quot viciſſim
> Te memores celebrare gaudent.

I will not commend the figure which makes the orator *pronounce the colours*, or give to *colours memory* and *delight*. I quote it, however, as an imitation of theſe lines:

> So many languages he had in ſtore,
> That only Fame ſhall ſpeak of him in more.

The ſimile, by which an old man, retaining the fire of his youth, is compared to Ætna flaming through the ſnow, which Smith has uſed with great pomp, is ſtolen from Cowley, however little worth the labour of conveyance.

He proceeded to take his degree of Master of Arts, July 8, 1696. Of the exercises which he performed on that occasion, I have not heard any thing memorable.

As his years advanced, he advanced in reputation; for he continued to cultivate his mind, though he did not amend his irregularities: by which he gave so much offence, that, April 24, 1700, the Dean and Chapter declared "the place of Mr. Smith void, he "having been convicted of riotous behaviour in the "house of Mr. Cole, an apothecary: but it was re-"ferred to the Dean when and upon what occasion "the sentence should be put in execution."

Thus tenderly was he treated: the governors of his college could hardly keep him, and yet wished that he would not force them to drive him away.

Some time afterwards he assumed an appearance of decency: in his own phrase, he *whitened* himself, having a desire to obtain the censorship, an office of honour and some profit in the college; but, when the election came, the preference was given to Mr. *Foulkes*, his junior: the same, I suppose, that joined with *Freind* in an edition of part of Demosthenes. The censor is a tutor; and it was not thought proper to trust the superintendance of others to a man who took so little care of himself.

From this time Smith employed his malice and his wit against the Dean, Dr. Aldrich, whom he considered as the opponent of his claim. Of his lampoon upon him, I once heard a single line too gross to be repeated.

But he was still a genius and a scholar, and Oxford was unwilling to lose him: he was endured,

with

with all his pranks and his vices, two years longer; but on Dec. 20, 1705, at the inſtance of all the canons, the ſentence declared five years before was put in execution.

The execution was, I believe, ſilent and tender; for one of his friends, from whom I learned much of his life, appeared not to know it.

He was now driven to London, where he aſſociated himſelf with the Whigs, whether becauſe they were in power, or becauſe the Tories had expelled him, or becauſe he was a Whig by principle, may perhaps be doubted. He was, however, careſſed by men of great abilities, whatever were their party, and was ſupported by the liberality of thoſe who delighted in his converſation.

There was once a deſign, hinted at by Oldiſworth, to have made him uſeful. One evening, as he was ſitting with a friend at a tavern, he was called down by the waiter; and, having ſtaid ſome time below, came up thoughtful. After a pauſe, ſaid he to his friend, "He that wanted me below was Addiſon, "whoſe buſineſs was to tell me that a Hiſtory of the "Revolution was intended, and to propoſe that I "ſhould undertake it. I ſaid, 'What ſhall I do "with the character of Lord Sunderland?' and Ad-"diſon immediately returned, 'When, Rag, were "you drunk laſt?' and went away."

Captain *Rag* was a name which he got at Oxford by his negligence of dreſs.

This ſtory I heard from the late Mr. Clark of Lincoln's Inn, to whom it was told by the friend of Smith.

Such ſcruples might debar him from ſome profitable employments; but, as they could not deprive him of any real eſteem, they left him many friends; and no man was ever better introduced to the theatre than he, who, in that violent conflict of parties, had a Prologue and Epilogue from the firſt wits on either ſide.

But learning and nature will now and then take different courſes. His play pleaſed the criticks, and the criticks only. It was, as Addiſon has recorded, hardly heard the third night. Smith had indeed truſted entirely to his merit, had enſured no band of applauders, nor uſed any artifice to force ſucceſs, and found that native excellence was not ſufficient for its own ſupport.

The play, however, was bought by Lintot, who advanced the price from fifty guineas, the current rate, to ſixty; and Halifax, the general patron, accepted the dedication. Smith's indolence kept him from writing the dedication till Lintot, after fruitleſs importunity, gave notice that he would publiſh the play without it. Now, therefore, it was written; and Halifax expected the author with his book, and had prepared to reward him with a place of three hundred pounds a year. Smith, by pride, or caprice, or indolence, or baſhfulneſs, neglected to attend him, though doubtleſs warned and preſſed by his friends, and at laſt miſſed his reward by not going to ſolicit it.

Addiſon has, in the *Spectator*, mentioned the neglect of Smith's tragedy as diſgraceful to the nation, and imputes it to the fondneſs for operas then prevailing. The authority of Addiſon is great; yet the

the voice of the people, when to pleaſe the people is the purpoſe, deſerves regard. In this queſtion, I cannot but think the people in the right. The fable is mythological, a ſtory which we are accuſtomed to reject as faulty; and the manners are ſo diſtant from our own, that we know them not from ſympathy, but by ſtudy: the ignorant do not underſtand the action; the learned reject it as a ſchool boy's tale; *incredulus odi.* What I cannot for a moment believe, I cannot for a moment behold with intereſt or anxiety. The ſentiments thus remote from life are removed yet further by the diction, which is too luxuriant and ſplendid for dialogue, and envelopes the thoughts rather than diſplays them. It is a ſcholar's play, ſuch as may pleaſe the reader rather than the ſpectator; the work of a vigorous and elegant mind, accuſtomed to pleaſe itſelf with its own conceptions, but of little acquaintance with the courſe of life.

Dennis tells us, in one of his pieces, that he had once a deſign to have written the tragedy of *Phædra*; but was convinced that the action was too mythological.

In 1709, a year after the exhibition of *Phædra*, died John Philips, the friend and fellow-collegian of Smith, who, on that occaſion, wrote a poem, which juſtice muſt place among the beſt elegies which our language can ſhew, an elegant mixture of fondneſs and admiration, of dignity and ſoftneſs. There are ſome paſſages too ludicrous; but every human performance has its faults.

This elegy it was the mode among his friends to

purchafe for a guinea; and, as his acquaintance was numerous, it was a very profitable poem.

Of his *Pindar* mentioned by Oldifworth, I have never otherwife heard. His *Longinus* he intended to accompany with fome illuftrations, and had felected his inftances of the falfe *Sublime* from the works of Blackmore.

He refolved to try again the fortune of the Stage, with the ftory of Lady Jane Grey. It is not unlikely that his experience of the inefficacy and incredibility of a mythological tale might determine him to choofe an action from Englifh Hiftory, at no great diftance from our own times, which was to end in a real event, produced by the operation of known characters.

A fubject will not eafily occur that can give more opportunities of informing the underftanding, for which Smith was unqueftionably qualified, or for moving the paffions, in which I fufpect him to have had lefs power.

Having formed his plan and collected materials, he declared that a few months would complete his defign; and, that he might purfue his work with lefs frequent avocations, he was, in June, 1710, invited by Mr. George Ducket to his houfe at Gartham, in Wiltfhire. Here he found fuch opportunities of indulgence as did not much forward his ftudies, and particularly fome ftrong ale, too delicious to be refifted. He ate and drank till he found himfelf plethorick: and then, refolving to eafe himfelf by evacuation, he wrote to an apothecary in the neighbourhood a prefcription of a purge fo forcible, that the apothecary thought it his duty to delay it till

he had given notice of its danger. Smith, not pleaſed with the contradiction of a ſhopman, and boaſtful of his own knowledge, treated the notice with rude contempt, and ſwallowed his own medicine, which, in July, 1710, brought him to the grave. He was buried at Gartham.

Many years afterwards, Ducket communicated to Oldmixon, the hiſtorian, an account pretended to have been received from Smith, that Clarendon's Hiſtory was, in its publication, corrupted by Aldrich, Smalridge, and Atterbury; and that Smith was employed to forge and inſert the alterations.

This ſtory was publiſhed triumphantly by Oldmixon, and may be ſuppoſed to have been eagerly received; but its progreſs was ſoon checked; for, finding its way into the Journal of Trevoux, it fell under the eye of Atterbury, then an exile in France, who immediately denied the charge, with this remarkable particular, that he never in his whole life had once ſpoken to Smith; his company being, as muſt be inferred, not accepted by thoſe who attended to their characters.

The charge was afterwards very diligently refuted by Dr. Burton, of Eton, a man eminent for literature; and, though not of the ſame party with Aldrich and Atterbury, too ſtudious of truth to leave them burthened with a falſe charge. The teſtimonies which he has collected have convinced mankind that either Smith or Ducket was guilty of wilful and malicious falſehood.

This controverſy brought into view thoſe parts of Smith's life which, with more honour to his name, might have been concealed.

 Of

Of Smith I can yet ſay a little more. He was a man of ſuch eſtimation among his companions, that the caſual cenſures or praiſes which he dropped in converſation were conſidered, like thoſe of Scaliger, as worthy of preſervation.

He had great readineſs and exactneſs of criticiſm, and by a curſory glance over a new compoſition would exactly tell all its faults and beauties.

He was remarkable for the power of reading with great rapidity, and of retaining with great fidelity what he ſo eaſily collected.

He therefore always knew what the preſent queſtion required; and, when his friends expreſſed their wonder at his acquiſitions, made in a ſtate of apparent negligence and drunkenneſs, he never diſcovered his hours of reading or method of ſtudy, but involved himſelf in affected ſilence, and fed his own vanity with their admiration.

One practice he had, which was eaſily obſerved: if any thought or image was preſented to his mind, that he could uſe or improve, he did not ſuffer it to be loſt; but, amidſt the jollity of a tavern, or in the warmth of converſation, very diligently committed it to paper.

Thus it was that he had gathered two quires of hints for his new tragedy; of which Rowe, when they were put into his hands, could make, as he ſays, very little uſe, but which the collector conſidered as a valuable ſtock of materials.

When he came to London, his way of life connected him with the licentious and diſſolute; and he affected the airs and gaiety of a man of pleaſure; but his dreſs was always deficient; ſcholaſtick

cloudineſs

cloudineſs ſtill hung about him; and his merriment was ſure to produce the ſcorn of his companions.

With all his careleſſneſs, and all his vices, he was one of the murmurers at Fortune; and wondered why he was ſuffered to be poor, when Addiſon was careſſed and preferred; nor would a very little have contented him; for he eſtimated his wants at ſix hundred pounds a year.

In his courſe of reading, it was particular that he had diligently peruſed, and accurately remembered, the old romances of knight-errantry.

He had a high opinion of his own merit, and was ſomething contemptuous in his treatment of thoſe whom he conſidered as not qualified to oppoſe or contradict him. He had many frailties; yet it cannot but be ſuppoſed that he had great merit, who could obtain to the ſame play a prologue from Addiſon, and an epilogue from Prior; and who could have at once the patronage of Halifax, and the praiſe of Oldiſworth.

For the power of communicating theſe minute memorials, I am indebted to my converſation with Gilbert Walmſley, late regiſtrar of the eccleſiaſtical court of Lichfield, who was acquainted both with Smith and Ducket; and declared, that, if the tale concerning Clarendon were forged, he ſhould ſuſpect Ducket of the falſehood; "for Rag was a man "of great veracity."

Of Gilbert Walmſley, thus preſented to my mind, let me indulge myſelf in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the firſt friends that literature procured me, and I hope that

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at leaſt my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

He was of an advanced age, and I was only yet a boy; yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a Whig, with all the virulence and malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honoured him, and he endured me.

He had mingled with the gay world without exemption from its vices or its follies, but had never neglected the cultivation of his mind; his belief of Revelation was unſhaken; his learning preſerved his principles; he grew firſt regular, and then pious.

His ſtudies had been ſo various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great; and what he did not immediately know, he could at leaſt tell where to find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and ſuch his copiouſneſs of communication, that it may be doubted whether a day now paſſes in which I have not ſome advantage from his friendſhip.

At this man's table I enjoyed many chearful and inſtructive hours, with companions ſuch as are not often found; with one who has lengthened, and one who has gladdened, life; with Dr. James, whoſe ſkill in Phyſick will be long remembered; and with David Garrick, whom I hoped to have gratified with this character of our common friend: but what are the hopes of man! I am diſappointed by that ſtroke of death, which has eclipſed the gaiety of nations, and impoveriſhed the publick ſtock of harmleſs pleaſure.

In

In the Library at Oxford is the following ludicrous Analysis of *Pocockius*:

Ex Autographo.

[Sent by the Author to Mr. Urry.]

OPUSCULUM hoc, Halberdarie amplissime, in lucem proferre hactenus distuli, judicii tui acumen subveritus magis quam bipennis. Tandem aliquando oden hanc ad te mitto sublimem, teneram, flebilem, suavem, qualem demum divinus (si Musis vacaret) scripsisset Gastrellus: adeo scilicet sublimem ut inter legendum dormire, adeo flebilem ut ridere velis. Cujus elegantiam ut melius inspicias, versuum ordinem & materiam breviter referam. 1^{mus} versus de doubus præliis decantatis. 2^{dus} & 3us de Lotharingio, cuniculis subterraneis, saxis, ponto, hostibus, & Asia. 4^{tus} & 5^{tus} de catenis, subdibus, uncis, draconibus, tigribus & crocodilis. 6us, 7us, 8us, 9us, de Gomorrha, de Babylone, Babele, & quodam domi suæ peregrino. 10us, aliquid de quodam Pocockio. 11us, 12us, de Syriâ, Solymâ. 13us, 14us, de Hoseâ, & quercu, & de juvene quodam valde sene. 15us, 16us, de Ætnâ, & quomodo Ætna Pocockio sit valde similis. 17us, 18us, de tubâ, astro, umbrâ, flammis, rotis, Pocockio non neglecto. Cætera de Christianis, Ottomanis, Babyloniis, Arabibus, & gravissimâ agrorum melancholiâ; de Cæsare *Flacco**, Nestore, & miserando juvenis cujusdam florentissimi fato, anno ætatis suæ centesimo præmaturè abrepti. Quæ omnia cum accuratè expenderis, necesse est ut

* Pro *Flacco*, animo paulo attentiore, scripsissem *Marone*.

oden

oden hanc meam admirandâ planè varietate conſtare fatearis. Subito ad Batavos proficiſcor, lauro ab illis donandus. Prius vero Pembrochienſes voco ad certamen Poeticum. Vale.

Illuſtriſſima tua deoſculor crura.

E. SMITH.

THE TRESOURE ... MAHAL.

DUKE.

OF Mr. RICHARD DUKE I can find few memorials. He was bred at Weftminfter * and Cambridge; and Jacob relates, that he was fome time tutor to the duke of Richmond.

He appears from his writings to have been not ill qualified for poetical compofitions; and being confcious of his powers, when he left the univerfity, he enlifted himfelf among the Wits. He was the familiar friend of Otway; and was engaged, among other popular names, in the tranflations of Ovid and Juvenal. In his *Review*, though unfinifhed, are fome vigorous lines. His poems are not below mediocrity; nor have I found much in them to be praifed †.

* He was admitted there in 1670; was elected to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1675; and took his mafter's degree in 1682. N.

† They make a part of a volume publifhed by Tonfon in 8vo. 1717, containing the Poems of the earl of Rofcommon, and the duke of Buckingham's Effay on Poetry; but were firft publifhed in Dryden's Mifcellany, as were moft, if not all, of the poems in that collection. H.

With

With the wit he ſeems to have ſhared the diſſoluteneſs of the times; for ſome of his compoſitions are ſuch as he muſt have reviewed with deteſtation in his later days, when he publiſhed thoſe Sermons which *Felton* has commended.

Perhaps, like ſome other fooliſh young men, he rather talked than lived viciouſly, in an age when he that would be thought a Wit was afraid to ſay his prayers; and whatever might have been bad in the firſt part of his life, was ſurely condemned and reformed by his better judgement.

In 1683, being then Maſter of Arts, and Fellow of Trinity College in Cambridge, he wrote a poem on the marriage of the Lady Anne with George Prince of Denmark.

He then took orders; and, being made prebendary of Glouceſter, became a proctor in convocation for that church, and chaplain to Queen Anne.

In 1710, he was preſented by the biſhop of Wincheſter to the wealthy living of Witney in Oxfordſhire, which he enjoyed but a few months. On February 10, 1710-11, having returned from an entertainment, he was found dead the next morning. His death is mentioned in Swift's Journal.

KING.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

KING.

WILLIAM KING was born in London in 1663; the Son of Ezekiel King, a gentleman. He was allied to the family of Clarendon.

From Weſtminſter-ſchool, where he was a ſcholar on the foundation under the care of Dr. Buſby, he was at eighteen elected to Chriſt-church, in 1681; where he is ſaid to have proſecuted his ſtudies with ſo much intenſeneſs and activity, that before he was eight years ſtanding he had read over, and made remarks upon, twenty-two thouſand odd hundred books and manuſcripts. The books were certainly not very long, the manuſcripts not very difficult, nor the remarks very large; for the calculator will find that he diſpatched ſeven a day for every day of his eight years; with a remnant that more than ſatisfies moſt other ſtudents. He took his degree in the moſt expenſive manner, as a *grand compounder*; whence it is inferred that he inherited a conſiderable fortune.

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In 1688, the ſame year in which he was made maſter of arts, he publiſhed a confutation of Varillas's account of Wickliffe; and, engaging in the ſtudy of the Civil Law, became doctor in 1692, and was admitted advocate at Doctors Commons.

He had already made ſome tranſlations from the French, and written ſome humorous and ſatirical pieces; when, in 1694, Moleſworth publiſhed his *Account of Denmark*, in which he treats the Danes and their monarch with great contempt; and takes the opportunity of inſinuating thoſe wild principles, by which he ſuppoſes liberty to be eſtabliſhed, and by which his adverſaries ſuſpect that all ſubordination and government is endangered.

This book offended Prince George; and the Daniſh miniſter preſented a memorial againſt it. The principles of its author did not pleaſe Dr. King; and therefore he undertook to confute part, and laugh at the reſt. The controverſy is now forgotten: and books of this kind ſeldom live long, when intereſt and reſentment have ceaſed.

In 1697, he mingled in the controverſy between Boyle and Bentley; and was one of thoſe who tried what Wit could perform in oppoſition to Learning, on a queſtion which Learning only could decide.

In 1699, was publiſhed by him *A Journey to London*, after the method of Dr. *Martin Liſter*, who had publiſhed *A Journey to Paris*. And, in 1700, he ſatiriſed the Royal Society, at leaſt Sir *Hans Sloane* their preſident, in two dialogues, intituled *The Tranſactioneer*.

Though he was a regular advocate in the courts of civil and canon law, he did not love his profeſſion,

feſſion, nor indeed any kind of buſineſs which interrupted his voluptuary dreams, or forced him to rouſe from that indulgence in which only he could find delight. His reputation as a civilian was yet maintained by his judgements in the courts of Delegates, and raiſed very high by the addreſs and knowledge which he diſcovered in 1700, when he defended the earl of Angleſea againſt his lady, afterwards dutcheſs of Buckinghamſhire, who ſued for a divorce, and obtained it.

The expence of his pleaſures, and neglect of buſineſs, had now leſſened his revenues; and he was willing to accept of a ſettlement in Ireland, where, about 1702, he was made judge of the admiralty, commiſſioner of the prizes, keeper of the records in Birmingham's tower, and vicar-general to Dr. Marſh, the primate.

But it is vain to put wealth within the reach of him who will not ſtretch out his hand to take it. King ſoon found a friend, as idle and thoughtleſs as himſelf, in *Upton*, one of the judges, who had a pleaſant houſe called Mountown, near Dublin, to which King frequently retired; delighting to neglect his intereſt, forget his cares, and deſert his duty.

Here he wrote *Mully of Mountown*, a poem; by which, though fanciful readers in the pride of ſagacity have given it a poetical interpretation, was meant originally no more than it expreſſed, as it was dictated only by the author's delight in the quiet of *Mountown*.

In 1708, when lord Wharton was ſent to govern Ireland, King returned to London, with his poverty, his

his idleneſs, and his wit; and publiſhed ſome eſſays, called *Uſeful Tranſactions*. His *Voyage to the Iſland of Cajamai* is particularly commended. He then wrote the *Art of Love*, a poem remarkable, notwithſtanding its title, for purity of ſentiment; and in 1709 imitated Horace in an *Art of Cookery*, which he publiſhed, with ſome letters to Dr. Liſter.

In 1710, he appeared as a lover of the Church, on the ſide of Sacheverell; and was ſuppoſed to have concurred at leaſt in the projection of *The Examiner*. His eyes were open to all the operations of Whiggiſm; and he beſtowed ſome ſtrictures upon Dr. Kennet's adulatory ſermon at the funeral of the duke of Devonſhire.

The *Hiſtory of the Heathen Gods*, a book compoſed for ſchools, was written by him in 1711. The work is uſeful; but might have been produced without the powers of King. The ſame year, he publiſhed *Rufinus*, an hiſtorical eſſay; and a poem, intended to diſpoſe the nation to think as he thought of the duke of Marlborough and his adherents.

In 1711, competence, if not plenty, was again put into his power. He was, without the trouble of attendance, or the mortification of a requeſt, made gazetteer. Swift, Freind, Prior, and other men of the ſame party, brought him the key of the gazetteer's office. He was now again placed in a profitable employment, and again threw the benefit away. An Act of Inſolvency made his buſineſs at that time particularly troubleſome; and he would not wait till hurry ſhould be at an end, but impatiently reſigned it,

it, and returned to his wonted indigence and amusements.

One of his amusements at Lambeth, where he resided, was to mortify Dr. Tenison, the archbishop, by a publick festivity, on the surrender of Dunkirk to Hill; an event with which Tenison's political bigotry did not suffer him to be delighted. King was resolved to counteract his sullenness, and at the expence of a few barrels of ale filled the neighbourhood with honest merriment.

In the autumn of 1712, his health declined; he grew weaker by degrees, and died on Christmas-day. Though his life had not been without irregularity, his principles were pure and orthodox, and his death was pious.

After this relation, it will be naturally supposed that his poems were rather the amusements of idleness than efforts of study; that he endeavoured rather to divert than astonish; that his thoughts seldom aspired to sublimity; and that, if his verse was easy and his images familiar, he attained what he desired. His purpose is to be merry; but perhaps, to enjoy his mirth, it may be sometimes necessary to think well of his opinions.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

SPRAT.

THOMAS SPRAT was born in 1636, at Tallaton in Devonſhire, the ſon of a clergyman; and having been educated, as he tells of himſelf, not at Weſtminſter or Eton, but at a little ſchool by the church-yard ſide, became a commoner of Wadham College in Oxford in 1651; and, being choſen ſcholar next year, proceeded through the uſual academical courſe; and, in 1657, became maſter of arts. He obtained a fellowſhip, and commenced poet.

In 1659, his poem on the death of Oliver was publiſhed, with thoſe of Dryden and Waller. In his dedication to Dr. Wilkins, he appears a very willing and liberal encomiaſt, both of the living and the dead. He implores his patron's excuſe of his verſes, both as falling "ſo infinitely below the full "and ſublime genius of that excellent poet who "made this way of writing free of our nation," and being "ſo little equal and proportioned to the re-"nown of a prince on whom they were written; "ſuch great actions and lives deſerving to be the

"subject of the noblest pens and most divine phan-"fies." He proceeds: "Having so long expe-"rienced your care and indulgence, and been "formed, as it were, by your own hands, not to en-"title you to any thing which my meanness pro-"duces would be not only injustice, but sacrilege."

He published, the same year, a poem on the *Plague of Athens*; a subject of which it is not easy to say what could recommend it. To these he added afterwards a poem on Mr. Cowley's death.

After the Restoration he took orders, and by Cowley's recommendation was made chaplain to the duke of Buckingham, whom he is said to have helped in writing the *Rehearsal*. He was likewise chaplain to the king.

As he was the favourite of Wilkins, at whose house began those philosophical conferences and enquiries which in time produced the Royal Society, he was consequently engaged in the same studies, and became one of the fellows: and when, after their incorporation, something seemed necessary to reconcile the publick to the new institution, he undertook to write its history, which he published in 1667. This is one of the few books which selection of sentiment and elegance of diction have been able to preserve, though written upon a subject flux and transitory. The History of the Royal Society is now read, not with the wish to know what they were then doing, but how their Transactions are exhibited by Sprat.

In the next year he published *Observations on Sorbiere's Voyage into England, in a Letter to Mr. Wren.*

 This

This is a work not ill-performed; but perhaps rewarded with at leaſt its full proportion of praiſe.

In 1668, he publiſhed Cowley's Latin poems, and prefixed in Latin the Life of the Author; which he afterwards amplified, and placed before Cowley's Engliſh works, which were by will committed to his care.

Eccleſiaſtical benefices now fell faſt upon him. In 1668, he became a prebendary of Weſtminſter, and had afterwards the church of St. Margaret, adjoining to the Abbey. He was, in 1680, made canon of Windſor; in 1683, dean of Weſtminſter; and, in 1684, biſhop of Rocheſter.

The Court having thus a claim to his diligence and gratitude, he was required to write the Hiſtory of the Rye-houſe Plot; and, in 1685, publiſhed *A true Account and Declaration of the horrid Conſpiracy againſt the late King, his preſent Majeſty, and the preſent Government*; a performance which he thought convenient, after the Revolution, to extenuate and excuſe.

The ſame year, being clerk of the cloſet to the king, he was made dean of the chapel-royal; and, the year afterwards, received the laſt proof of his maſter's confidence, by being appointed one of the commiſſioners for eccleſiaſtical affairs. On the critical day, when the *Declaration* diſtinguiſhed the true ſons of the Church of England, he ſtood neuter, and permitted it to be read at Weſtminſter; but preſſed none to violate his conſcience; and, when the biſhop of London was brought before them, gave his voice in his favour.

 Thus

Thus far he ſuffered intereſt or obedience to carry him; but further he refuſed to go. When he found that the powers of the eccleſiaſtical commiſſion were to be exerciſed againſt thoſe who had refuſed the Declaration, he wrote to the lords, and other commiſſioners, a formal profeſſion of his unwillingneſs to exerciſe that authority any longer, and withdrew himſelf from them. After they had read his letter, they adjourned for ſix months, and ſcarcely ever met afterwards.

When king James was frighted away, and a new government was to be ſettled, Sprat was one of thoſe who conſidered, in a conference, the great queſtion, Whether the crown was vacant? and manfully ſpoke in favour of his old maſter.

He complied, however, with the new eſtabliſhment, and was left unmoleſted; but, in 1692, a ſtrange attack was made upon him by one *Robert Young* and *Stephen Blackhead*, both men convicted of infamous crimes, and both, when the ſcheme was laid, priſoners in Newgate. Theſe men drew up an Aſſociation, in which they whoſe names were ſubſcribed declared their reſolution to reſtore king James, to ſeize the princeſs of Orange dead or alive, and to be ready with thirty thouſand men to meet king James when he ſhould land. To this they put the names of Sancroft, Sprat, Marlborough, Saliſbury, and others. The copy of Dr. Sprat's name was obtained by a fictitious requeſt, to which an anſwer *in his own hand* was deſired. His hand was copied ſo well, that he confeſſed it might have deceived himſelf. Blackhead, who had carried the letter, being ſent again with a plauſible meſſage, very was

very curious to ſee the houſe, and particularly importunate to be let into the ſtudy; where, as is ſuppoſed, he deſigned to leave the Aſſociation. This, however, was denied him; and he dropped it in a flower-pot in the parlour.

Young now laid an information before the Privy Council; and May 7, 1692, the biſhop was arreſted, and kept at a meſſenger's under a ſtrict guard eleven days. His houſe was ſearched, and directions were given that the flower-pots ſhould be inſpected. The meſſengers, however, miſſed the room in which the paper was left. Blackhead went therefore a third time; and finding his paper where he had left it, brought it away.

The biſhop, having been enlarged, was, on June the 10th and 13th, examined again before the Privy Council, and confronted with his accuſers. Young perſiſted, with the moſt obdurate impudence, againſt the ſtrongeſt evidence; but the reſolution of Blackhead by degrees gave way. There remained at laſt no doubt of the biſhop's innocence, who, with great prudence and diligence, traced the progreſs, and detected the characters of the two informers, and publiſhed an account of his own examination and deliverance; which made ſuch an impreſſion upon him, that he commemorated it through life by an yearly day of thankſgiving.

With what hope, or what intereſt, the villains had contrived an accuſation which they muſt know themſelves utterly unable to prove, was never diſcovered.

After this, he paſſed his days in the quiet exerciſe of his function. When the cauſe of Sacheverell put the publick in commotion, he honeſtly appeared among

among the friends of the Church. He lived to his seventy-ninth year, and died May 20, 1713.

Burnet is not very favourable to his memory; but he and Burnet were old rivals. On some publick occasion they both preached before the house of commons. There prevailed in those days an indecent custom: when the preacher touched any favourite topick in a manner that delighted his audience, their approbation was expressed by a loud *hum*, continued in proportion to their zeal or pleasure. When Burnet preached, part of his congregation *hummed* so loudly and so long, that he sat down to enjoy it, and rubbed his face with his handkerchief. When Sprat preached, he likewise was honoured with the like animating *hum*; but he stretched out his hand to the congregation, and cried, "Peace, "peace, I pray you peace."

This I was told in my youth by my father, an old man, who had been no careless observer of the passages of those times.

Burnet's sermon, says Salmon, was remarkable for sedition, and Sprat's for loyalty. Burnet had the thanks of the house; Sprat had no thanks, but a good living from the king, which, he said, was of as much value as the thanks of the commons.

The works of Sprat, besides his few poems, are, The History of the Royal Society, The Life of Cowley, The answer to Sorbiere, The History of the Rye-house Plot, The Relation of his own Examination, and a volume of Sermons. I have heard it observed, with great justness, that every book is of a different kind, and that each has its distinct and characteristical excellence.

My

My buſineſs is only with his poems. He conſidered Cowley as a model; and ſuppoſed that, as he was imitated, perfection was approached. Nothing, therefore, but Pindarick liberty was to be expected. There is in his few productions no want of ſuch conceits as he thought excellent; and of thoſe our judgement may be ſettled by the firſt that appears in his praiſe of Cromwell, where he ſays, that Cromwell's "fame, like man, will grow white as it grows "old."

HALIFAX.

THE life of the Earl of Halifax was properly that of an artful and active ſtateſman, employed in balancing parties, contriving expedients, and combating oppoſition, and expoſed to the viciſſitudes of advancement and degradation; but, in this collection, poetical merit is the claim to attention; and the account which is here to be expected may properly be proportioned not to his influence in the ſtate, but to his rank among the writers of verſe.

Charles Montague was born April 16, 1661, at Horton, in Northamptonſhire, the ſon of Mr. George Montague, a younger ſon of the earl of Mancheſter. He was educated firſt in the country, and then removed to Weſtminſter, where, in 1677, he was choſen a king's ſcholar, and recommended himſelf to Buſby by his felicity in extemporary epigrams. He contracted a very intimate friendſhip with Mr. Stepney; and, in 1682, when Stepney was elected at Cambridge, the election of Montague being not to proceed till the year following, he was afraid leſt by being placed at Oxford he might be ſeparated from his

his companion, and therefore ſolicited to be removed to Cambridge, without waiting for the advantages of another year.

It ſeems indeed time to wiſh for a removal; for he was already a ſchool-boy of one-and-twenty.

His relation, Dr. Montague, was then maſter of the college in which he was placed a fellow-commoner, and took him under his particular care. Here he commenced an acquaintance with the great Newton, which continued through his life, and was at laſt atteſted by a legacy.

In 1685, his verſes on the death of king Charles made ſuch an impreſſion on the earl of Dorſet, that he was invited to town, and introduced by that univerſal patron to the other wits. In 1687, he joined with Prior in the *City Mouſe and the Country Mouſe*, a burleſque of Dryden's *Hind and Panther*. He ſigned the invitation to the Prince of Orange, and ſat in the convention. He about the ſame time married the counteſs dowager of Mancheſter, and intended to have taken orders; but afterwards altering his purpoſe, he purchaſed for 1500l. the place of one of the clerks of the council.

After he had written his epiſtle on the victory of the *Boyne*, his patron Dorſet introduced him to king William, with this expreſſion: "Sir, I have brought "a *Mouſe* to wait on your Majeſty." To which the king is ſaid to have replied, "You do well to put "me in the way of making a *Man* of him;" and ordered him a penſion of five hundred pounds. This ſtory, however current, ſeems to have been made after the event. The king's anſwer implies a greater acquaintance with our proverbial and familiar

miliar diction than king William could possibly have attained.

In 1691, being member of the house of commons, he argued warmly in favour of a law to grant the assistance of counsel in trials for high-treason; and, in the midst of his speech falling into some confusion, was for a while silent; but, recovering himself, observed, "how reasonable it was to allow "counsel to men called as criminals before a court "of justice, when it appeared how much the pre-"sence of that assembly could disconcert one of their "own body *."

After this he rose fast into honours and employments, being made one of the commissioners of the treasury, and called to the privy-council. In 1694, he became chancellor of the exchequer; and the next year engaged in the great attempt of the recoinage, which was in two years happily completed. In 1696, he projected the *general fund*, and raised the credit of the exchequer; and, after enquiry concerning a grant of Irish crown-lands, it was determined by a vote of the commons, that Charles Montague, esquire, *had deserved his Majesty's favour*. In 1698, being advanced to the first commission of the treasury, he was appointed one of the regency in the king's absence: the next year he was made auditor of the exchequer, and the year after created *baron Halifax*. He was, however, impeached by the commons; but the articles were dismissed by the lords.

* This anecdote is related by Mr. Walpole, in his Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, of the Earl of Shaftesbury, author of the Characteristicks. R.

At the acceſſion of Queen Anne he was diſmiſſed from the council; and in the firſt parliament of her reign was again attacked by the Commons, and again eſcaped by the protection of the Lords. In 1704, he wrote an anſwer to Bromley's ſpeech againſt occaſional conformity. He headed the Enquiry into the danger of the Church. In 1706, he propoſed and negociated the Union with Scotland; and when the elector of Hanover received the garter, after the act had paſſed for ſecuring the Proteſtant Succeſſion, he was appointed to carry the enſigns of the order to the electoral court. He ſat as one of the judges of Sacheverell; but voted for a mild ſentence. Being now no longer in favour, he contrived to obtain a writ for ſummoning the electoral prince to parliament as duke of Cambridge.

At the queen's death he was appointed one of the regents; and at the acceſſion of George the Firſt was made earl of Halifax, knight of the garter, and firſt commiſſioner of the treaſury, with a grant to his nephew of the reverſion of the auditorſhip of the exchequer. More was not to be had, and this he kept but a little while; for, on the 19th of May, 1715, he died of an inflammation of his lungs.

Of him, who from a poet became a patron of poets, it will be readily believed that the works would not miſs of celebration. Addiſon began to praiſe him early, and was followed or accompanied by other poets; perhaps by almoſt all, except Swift and Pope, who forbore to flatter him in his life, and

after

after his death ſpoke of him, Swift with ſlight cenſure, and Pope in the character Bufo with acrimonious contempt.

He was, as Pope ſays, "fed with dedications;" for Tickell affirms that no dedication was unrewarded. To charge all unmerited praiſe with the guilt of flattery, and to ſuppoſe that the encomiaſt always knows and feels the falſehoods of his aſſertions, is ſurely to diſcover great ignorance of human nature and human life. In determinations depending not on rules, but on experience and compariſon, judgement is always in ſome degree ſubject to affection. Very near to admiration is the wiſh to admire.

Every man willingly gives value to the praiſe which he receives, and conſiders the ſentence paſſed in his favour as the ſentence of diſcernment. We admire in a friend that underſtanding that ſelected us for confidence; we admire more, in a patron, that judgement which, inſtead of ſcattering bounty indiſcriminately, directed it to us; and, if the patron be an author, thoſe performances which gratitude forbids us to blame, affectation will eaſily diſpoſe us to exalt.

To theſe prejudices, hardly culpable, intereſt adds a power always operating, though not always, becauſe not willingly, perceived. The modeſty of praiſe wears gradually away; and perhaps the pride of patronage may be in time ſo increaſed, that modeſt praiſe will no longer pleaſe.

Many

Many a blandiſhment was practiſed upon Halifax, which he would never have known, had he no other attractions than thoſe of his poetry, of which a ſhort time has withered the beauties. It would now be eſteemed no honour, by a contributor to the monthly bundles of verſes, to be told, that, in ſtrains either familiar or ſolemn, he ſings like Montague.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

PARNELL.

THE Life of Dr. PARNELL is a taſk which I ſhould very willingly decline, ſince it has been lately written by Goldſmith, a man of ſuch variety of powers, and ſuch felicity of performance, that he always ſeemed to do beſt that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tedioufneſs, and general without confuſion; whoſe language was copious without exuberance, exact without conſtraint, and eaſy without weakneſs.

What ſuch an author has told, who would tell again? I have made an abſtract from his larger narrative; and have this gratification from my attempt, that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldſmith.

Τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐςὶ θανόντων.

THOMAS PARNELL was the ſon of a commonwealthſman of the ſame name, who, at the Reſtoration, left Congleton in Cheſhire, where the

family had been eſtabliſhed for ſeveral centuries, and, ſettling in Ireland, purchaſed an eſtate, which, with his lands in Cheſhire, deſcended to the poet, who was born at Dublin in 1679; and, after the uſual education at a grammar-ſchool, was, at the age of thirteen, admitted into the College, where, in 1700, he became maſter of arts; and was the ſame year ordained a deacon, though under the canonical age, by a diſpenſation from the biſhop of Derry.

About three years afterwards he was made a prieſt; and in 1705 Dr. Aſhe, the biſhop of Clogher, conferred upon him the archdeaconry of Clogher. About the ſame time he married Mrs. Anne Minchin, an amiable lady, by whom he had two ſons, who died young, and a daughter who long ſurvived him.

At the ejection of the Whigs, in the end of queen Anne's reign, Parnell was perſuaded to change his party, not without much cenſure from thoſe whom he forſook, and was received by the new miniſtry as a valuable reinforcement. When the earl of Oxford was told that Dr. Parnell waited among the crowd in the outer room, he went by the perſuaſion of Swift, with his treaſurer's ſtaff in his hand, to enquire for him, and to bid him welcome; and, as may be inferred from Pope's dedication, admitted him as a favourite companion to his convivial hours, but, as it ſeems often to have happened in thoſe times to the favourites of the Great, without attention to his fortune, which, however, was in no great need of improvement.

Parnell,

Parnell, who did not want ambition or vanity, was desirous to make himself conspicuous, and to shew how worthy he was of high preferment. As he thought himself qualified to become a popular preacher, he displayed his elocution with great success in the pulpits of London; but the queen's death putting an end to his expectations, abated his diligence; and Pope represents him as falling from that time into intemperance of wine. That in his latter life he was too much a lover of the bottle, is not denied; but I have heard it imputed to a cause more likely to obtain forgiveness from mankind, the untimely death of a darling son; or, as others tell, the loss of his wife, who died (1712) in the midst of his expectations.

He was now to derive every future addition to his preferments from his personal interest with his private friends, and he was not long unregarded. He was warmly recommended by Swift to archbishop King, who gave him a prebend in 1713; and in May 1716 presented him to the vicarage of Finglass in the diocese of Dublin, worth four hundred pounds a year. Such notice from such a man inclines me to believe, that the vice of which he has been accused was not gross, or not notorious.

But his prosperity did not last long. His end, whatever was its cause, was now approaching. He enjoyed his preferment little more than a year; for in July 1717, in his thirty-eighth year, he died at Chester on his way to Ireland.

He seems to have been one of those poets who take delight in writing. He contributed to the papers of that time, and probably published more than

he owned. He left many compoſitions behind him, of which Pope ſelected thoſe which he thought beſt, and dedicated them to the earl of Oxford. Of theſe Goldſmith has given an opinion, and his criticiſm it is ſeldom ſafe to contradict. He beſtows juſt praiſe upon the *The Riſe of Woman*, *the Fairy Tale*, and the *Pervigilium Veneris*; but has very properly remarked, that in the *Battle of Mice and Frogs* the Greek names have not in Engliſh their original effect.

He tells us, that the *Bookworm* is borrowed from *Beza*; but he ſhould have added with modern applications: and, when he diſcovers that *Gay Bacchus* is tranſlated from *Augurellus*, he ought to have remarked that the latter part is purely Parnell's. Another poem, *When Spring comes on*, is, he ſays, taken from the French. I would add, that the deſcription of *Barrenneſs*, in his verſes to Pope, was borrowed from *Secundus*; but lately ſearching for the paſſage which I had formerly read, I could not find it. The *Night-piece on death* is indirectly preferred by Goldſmith to Gray's *Church-yard*; but, in my opinion, Gray has the advantage in dignity, variety, and originality of ſentiment. He obſerves, that the ſtory of the *Hermit* is in *More's* Dialogues and *Howell's Letters*, and ſuppoſes it to have been originally *Arabian*.

Goldſmith has not taken any notice of the *Elegy to the old Beauty*, which is perhaps the meaneſt; nor of the *Allegory on Man*, the happieſt of Parnell's performances. The hint of the *Hymn to Contentment* I ſuſpect to have been borrowed from Cleiveland.

The general character of Parnell is not great extent of comprehenſion, or fertility of mind. Of the little that appears ſtill leſs is his own. His praiſe muſt

be derived from the eafy fweetnefs of his diction: in his verfes there is more happinefs than pains; he is fprightly without effort, and always delights, though he never ravifhes; every thing is proper, yet every thing feems cafual. If there is fome appearance of elaboration in the *Hermit*, the narrative, as it is lefs airy, is lefs pleafing. Of his other compofitions it is impoffible to fay whether they are the productions of Nature, fo excellent as not to want the help of Art, or of Art fo refined as to refemble Nature.

This criticifm relates only to the pieces publifhed by Pope. Of the large appendages which I find in the laft edition, I can only fay, that I know not whence they came, nor have ever enquired whither they are going. They ftand upon the faith of the compilers.

GARTH.

SAMUEL GARTH was of a good family in Yorkſhire, and from ſome ſchool in his own country became a ſtudent at Peter-houſe in Cambridge, where he reſided till he became doctor of phyſick on July the 7th, 1691. He was examined before the College at London on March the 12th, 1691-2, and admitted fellow June 26th, 1693. He was ſoon ſo much diſtinguiſhed by his converſation and accompliſhments, as to obtain very extenſive practice; and, if a pamphlet of thoſe times may be credited, had the favour and confidence of one party, as Radcliffe had of the other.

He is always mentioned as a man of benevolence; and it is juſt to ſuppoſe that his deſire of helping the helpleſs diſpoſed him to ſo much zeal for the *Diſpenſary*; an undertaking, of which ſome account, however ſhort, is proper to be given.

Whether what Temple ſays be true, that phyſicians have had more learning than the other faculties, I will not ſtay to enquire; but, I believe, every

man

man has found in phyficians great liberality and dignity of fentiment, very prompt effufion of beneficence, and willingnefs to exert a lucrative art where there is no hope of lucre. Agreeably to this character, the College of Phyficians, in July 1687, publifhed an edict, requiring all the fellows, candidates, and licentiates, to give gratuitous advice to the neighbouring poor.

This edict was fent to the court of aldermen; and, a queftion being made to whom the appellation of the *poor* fhould be extended, the College anfwered, that it fhould be fufficient to bring a teftimonial from the clergyman officiating in the parifh where the patient refided.

After a year's experience, the phyficians found their charity fruftrated by fome malignant oppofition, and made to a great degree vain by the high price of phyfick; they therefore voted, in Auguft 1688, that the laboratory of the College fhould be accommodated to the preparation of medicines, and another room prepared for their reception; and that the contributors to the expence fhould manage the charity.

It was now expected, that the apothecaries would have undertaken the care of providing medicines; but they took another courfe. Thinking the whole defign pernicious to their intereft, they endeavoured to raife a faction againft it in the College, and found fome phyficians mean enough to folicit their patronage, by betraying to them the counfels of the College. The greater part, however, enforced by a new edict, in 1694, the former order of 1687, and fent it to the mayor and aldermen, who appointed a committee to treat with the College, and fettle the mode of adminiftering the charity.

It was desired by the aldermen, that the testimonials of churchwardens and overseers should be admitted; and that all hired servants, and all apprentices to handicraftsmen, should be considered as *poor*. This likewise was granted by the College.

It was then considered who should distribute the medicines, and who should settle their prices. The physicians procured some apothecaries to undertake the dispensation, and offered that the warden and company of the Apothecaries should adjust the price. This offer was rejected; and the apothecaries who had engaged to assist the charity were considered as traitors to the company, threatened with the Imposition of troublesome offices, and deterred from the performance of their engagements. The apothecaries ventured upon publick opposition, and presented a kind of remonstrance against the design to the committee of the city, which the physicians condescended to confute: and at least the traders seem to have prevailed among the sons of trade; for the proposal of the College having been considered, a paper of approbation was drawn up, but postponed and forgotten.

The physicians still persisted; and in 1696 a subscription was raised by themselves, according to an agreement prefixed to the Dispensary. The poor were, for a time, supplied with medicines; for how long a time, I know not. The medicinal charity, like others, began with ardour, but soon remitted, and at last died gradually away.

About the time of the subscription begins the action of the *Dispensary*. The Poem, as its subject was present and popular, co-operated with passions and

and prejudices then prevalent, and, with ſuch auxiliaries to its intrinſick merit, was univerſally and liberally applauded. It was on the ſide of charity againſt the intrigues of intereſt, and of regular learning againſt licentious uſurpation of medical authority, and was therefore naturally favoured by thoſe who read and can judge of poetry.

In 1697, Garth ſpoke that which is now called the *Harveian* Oration; which the authors of the Biographia mention with more praiſe than the paſſage quoted in their notes will fully juſtify. Garth, ſpeaking of the miſchiefs done by quacks, has theſe expreſſions: "Non tamen telis vulnerat iſta agyrtarum "colluvies, ſed theriacâ quâdam magis perniciosâ, "non pyrio, ſed pulvere neſcio quo exotico certat, "non globulis plumbeis, ſed pilulis æque lethalibus "interficit." This was certainly thought fine by the author, and is ſtill admired by his biographer. In October 1702, he became one of the cenſors of the College.

Garth, being an active and zealous Whig, was a member of the Kit-cat club, and, by conſequence, familiarly known to all the great men of that denomination. In 1710, when the government fell into other hands, he writ to lord Godolphin, on his diſmiſſion, a ſhort poem, which was criticiſed in the *Examiner*, and ſo ſucceſsfully either defended or excuſed by Mr. Addiſon, that, for the ſake of the vindication, it ought to be preſerved.

At the acceſſion of the preſent family his merits were acknowledged and rewarded. He was knighted with the ſword of his hero, Marlborough; and was made

made phyſician in ordinary to the king, and phyſician-general to the army.

He then undertook an edition of Ovid's Metamorphoſes, tranſlated by ſeveral hands; which he recommended by a Preface, written with more oſtentation than ability; his notions are half-formed, and his materials immethodically confuſed. This was his laſt work. He died Jan. 18, 1717-18, and was buried at Harrow-on-the-Hill.

His perſonal character ſeems to have been ſocial and liberal. He communicated himſelf through a very wide extent of acquaintance; and though firm in a party, at a time when firmneſs included virulence, yet he imparted his kindneſs to thoſe who were not ſuppoſed to favour his principles. He was an early encourager of Pope, and was at once the friend of Addiſon and of Granville. He is accuſed of voluptuouſneſs and irreligion; and Pope, who ſays, that "if ever there was a good Chriſtian, without knowing himſelf to be ſo, it was Dr. Garth," ſeems not able to deny what he is angry to hear, and loth to confeſs.

Pope afterwards declared himſelf convinced, that Garth died in the communion of the Church of Rome, having been privately reconciled. It is obſerved by Lowth, that there is leſs diſtance than is thought between ſcepticiſm and popery; and that a mind, wearied with perpetual doubt, willingly ſeeks repoſe in the boſom of an infallible Church.

His poetry has been praiſed at leaſt equally to its merit. In the *Diſpenſary* there is a ſtrain of ſmooth and free verſification; but few lines are eminently

elegant.

elegant. No paſſages fall below mediocrity, and few riſe much above it. The plan ſeems formed without juſt proportion to the ſubject; the means and end have no neceſſary connection. *Reſnel*, in his Preface to *Pope's* Eſſay, remarks, that Garth exhibits no diſcrimination of characters; and that what any one ſays might, with equal propriety, have been ſaid by another. The general deſign is, perhaps, open to criticiſm; but the compoſition can ſeldom be charged with inaccuracy or negligence. The author never ſlumbers in ſelf-indulgence; his full vigour is always exerted; ſcarcely a line is left unfiniſhed; nor is it eaſy to find an expreſſion uſed by conſtraint, or a thought imperfectly expreſſed. It was remarked by Pope, that the *Diſpenſary* had been corrected in every edition, and that every change was an improvement. It appears, however, to want ſomething of poetical ardour, and ſomething of general delectation; and therefore, ſince it has been no longer ſupported by accidental and intrinſick popularity, it has been ſcarcely able to ſupport itſelf.

ROWE.

NICHOLAS ROWE was born at Little Beckford, in Bedfordſhire, in 1673. His family had long poſſeſſed a conſiderable eſtate, with a good houſe, at Lambertoun in Devonſhire*. The anceſtor from whom he deſcended in a direct line received the arms borne by his deſcendants for his bravery in the Holy War. His father, John Rowe, who was the firſt that quitted his paternal acres to practiſe any part of profit, profeſſed the law, and publiſhed Benlow's and Dalliſon's Reports in the reign of James the Second, when in oppoſition to the notions, then diligently propagated, of diſpenſing power, he ventured to remark how low his authors rated the prerogative. He was made a ſerjeant, and died April 30, 1692. He was buried in the Temple church.

Nicholas was firſt ſent to a private ſchool at Highgate; and, being afterwards removed to Weſtmin-

* In the Villare, *Lamerton*. Orig. Edit.

ſter, was at twelve years * choſen one of the king's ſcholars. His maſter was Buſby, who ſuffered none of his ſcholars to let their powers lie uſeleſs; and his exerciſes in ſeveral languages are ſaid to have been written with uncommon degrees of excellence, and yet to have coſt him very little labour.

At ſixteen he had, in his father's opinion, made advances in learning ſufficient to qualify him for the ſtudy of law, and was entered a ſtudent of the Middle Temple, where for ſome time he read ſtatutes and reports with proficiency proportionate to the force of his mind, which was already ſuch that he endeavoured to comprehend law, not as a ſeries of precedents, or collection of poſitive precepts, but as a ſyſtem of rational government, and impartial juſtice.

When he was nineteen, he was, by the death of his father, left more to his own direction, and probably from that time ſuffered law gradually to give way to poetry. At twenty-five he produced the *Ambitious Step-Mother*, which was received with ſo much favour, that he devoted himſelf from that time wholly to elegant literature.

His next tragedy (1702) was *Tamerlane*, in which, under the name of Tamerlane, he intended to characterize king William, and Lewis the Fourteenth under Bajazet. The virtues of Tamerlane ſeem to have been arbritarily aſſigned him by his poet, for I know not that hiſtory gives any other qualities than thoſe which make a conqueror. The faſhion, however, of the time was, to accumulate upon Lewis all

* He was not elected till 1688. N.

that can raiſe horror and deteſtation; and whatever good was with-held from him, that it might not be thrown away, was beſtowed upon king William.

This was the tragedy which Rowe valued moſt, and that which probably, by the help of political auxiliaries, excited moſt applauſe; but occaſional poetry muſt often content itſelf with occaſional praiſe. Tamerlane has for a long time been acted only once a year, on the night when king William landed. Our quarrel with Lewis has been long over; and it now gratifies neither zeal nor malice to ſee him painted with aggravated features, like a Saracen upon a ſign.

The *Fair Penitent*, his next production (1703), is one of the moſt pleaſing tragedies on the ſtage, where it ſtill keeps its turns of appearing, and probably will long keep them, for there is ſcarcely any work of any poet at once ſo intereſting by the fable, and ſo delightful by the language. The ſtory is domeſtick, and therefore eaſily received by the imagination, and aſſimilated to common life; the diction is exquiſitely harmonious, and ſoft or ſprightly as occaſion requires.

The character of *Lothario* ſeems to have been expanded by Richardſon into *Lovelace*; but he has excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction. *Lothario*, with gaiety which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be deſpiſed, retains too much of the ſpectator's kindneſs. It was in the power of Richardſon alone to teach us at once eſteem and deteſtation, to make virtuous reſentment over-power all the benevolence which wit, elegance, and courage, naturally excite; and to loſe at laſt the hero in the villain.

The fifth act is not equal to the former; the events of the drama are exhausted, and little remains but to talk of what is past. It has been observed, that the title of the play does not sufficiently correspond with the behaviour of Calista, who at last shews no evident signs of repentance, but may be reasonably suspected of feeling pain from detection rather than from guilt, and expresses more shame than sorrow, and more rage than shame.

His next (1706) was *Ulysses*; which, with the common fate of mythological stories, is now generally neglected. We have been too early acquainted with the poetical heroes, to expect any pleasure from their revival; to shew them, as they have already been shewn, is to disgust by repetition; to give them new qualities, or new adventures, is to offend by violating received notions.

The *Royal Convert* (1708) seems to have a better claim to longevity. The fable is drawn from an obscure and barbarous age, to which fictions are more easily and properly adapted; for when objects are imperfectly seen, they easily take forms from imagination. The scene lies among our ancestors in our own country, and therefore very easily catches attention. *Rodogune* is a personage truly tragical, of high spirit, and violent passions, great with tempestuous dignity, and wicked with a soul that would have been heroick if it had been virtuous. The motto seems to tell, that this play was not successful.

Rowe does not always remember what his characters require. In *Tamerlane* there is some ridiculous mention of the God of Love; and Rodogune, a savage

vage Saxon, talks of Venus, and the eagle that bears the thunder of Jupiter.

This play difcovers its own date, by a prediction of the *Union*, in imitation of Cranmer's prophetick promifes to *Henry the Eighth*. The anticipated bleffings of union are not very naturally introduced, nor very happily expreffed.

He once (1706) tried to change his hand. He ventured on a comedy, and produced the *Biter*; with which, though it was unfavourably treated by the audience, he was himfelf delighted; for he is faid to have fat in the houfe laughing with great vehemence, whenever he had, in his own opinion, produced a jeft. But, finding that he and the publick had no fympathy of mirth, he tried at lighter fcenes no more.

After the Royal Convert (1714) appeared *Jane Shore*, written, as its author profeffes, *in imitation of Shakfpeare's ftyle*. In what he thought himfelf an imitator of Shakfpeare, it is not eafy to conceive. The numbers, the diction, the fentiments, and the conduct, every thing in which imitation can confift, are remote in the utmoft degree from the manner of Shakfpeare; whofe dramas it refembles only as it is an Englifh ftory, and as fome of the perfons have their names in hiftory. This play, confifting chiefly of domeftick fcenes and private diftrefs, lays hold upon the heart. The wife is forgiven becaufe fhe repents, and the hufband is honoured becaufe he forgives. This, therefore, is one of thofe pieces which we ftill welcome on the ftage.

His laft tragedy (1715) was *Lady Jane Grey*. This fubject had been chofen by Mr. Smith, whofe

papers

papers were put into Rowe's hands fuch as he defcribes them in his preface. This play has likewife funk into oblivion. From this time he gave nothing more to the ftage.

Being by a competent fortune exempted from any neceffity of combating his inclination, he never wrote in diftrefs, and therefore does not appear to have ever written in hafte. His works were finifhed to his own approbation, and bear few marks of negligence or hurry. It is remarkable, that his prologues and epilogues are all his own, thoguh he fometimes fupplied others; he afforded help, but did not folicit it.

As his ftudies neceffarily made him acquainted with Shakfpeare, and acquaintance produced veneration, he undertook (1709) an edition of his works, from which he neither received much praife, nor feems to have expected it; yet, I believe, thofe who compare it with former copies will find that he has done more than he promifed; and that, without the pomp of notes or boafts of criticifm, many paffages are happily reftored. He prefixed a life of the author, fuch as tradition, then almoft expiring, could fupply, and a preface *; which cannot be faid to difcover much profundity or penetration. He at leaft contributed to the popularity of his author.

He was willing enough to improve his fortune by other arts than poetry. He was under-fecretary for three years when the duke of Queenfberry was fecretary of ftate, and afterwards applied to the earl of Oxford for fome publick employment †. Oxford

* Mr. Rowe's Preface, however, is not diftinct, as it might be fuppofed from this paffage from the Life. R.

† Spence.

enjoined him to ſtudy Spaniſh; and when, ſome time afterwards, he came again, and ſaid that he had maſtered it, diſmiſſed him with this congratulation, "Then, Sir, I envy you the pleaſure of reading Don "Quixote in the original."

This ſtory is ſufficiently atteſted; but why Oxford, who deſired to be thought a favourer of literature, ſhould thus inſult a man of acknowledged merit: or how Rowe, who was ſo keen a Whig* that he did not willingly converſe with men of the oppoſite party, could aſk preferment from Oxford; it is not now poſſible to diſcover. Pope, who told the ſtory, did not ſay on what occaſion the advice was given; and, though he owned Rowe's diſappointment, doubted whether any injury was intended him, but thought it rather lord Oxford's *odd way*.

It is likely that he lived on diſcontented through the reſt of Queen Anne's reign; but the time came at laſt when he found kinder friends. At the acceſſion of king George he was made poet-laureat; I am afraid by the ejection of poor Nahum Tate, who (1716) died in the Mint, where he was forced to ſeek ſhelter by extreme poverty. He was made likewiſe one of the land-ſurveyors of the cuſtoms of the port of London. The prince of Wales choſe him clerk of his council; and the lord chancellor Parker, as ſoon as he received the ſeals, appointed him, unaſked, ſecretary of the preſentations. Such an accumulation of employments undoubtedly produced a very conſiderable revenue.

Having already tranſlated ſome parts of *Lucan's Pharſalia*, which had been publiſhed in the Miſcel-

* Spence.

lanies,

lanies, and doubtlefs received many praifes, he undertook a verfion of the whole work, which he lived to finifh, but not to publifh. It feems to have been printed under the care of Dr. Welwood, who prefixed the author's life, in which is contained the following character:

"As to his perfon, it was graceful and well made; "his face regular, and of a manly beauty. As his "foul was well-lodged, fo its rational and animal "faculties excelled in a high degree. He had a "quick and fruitful invention, a deep penetration, "and a large compafs of thought, with fingular "dexterity and eafinefs in making his thoughts to "be underftood. He was mafter of moft parts of "polite learning, efpecially the claffical authors, "both Greek and Latin; underftood the French, "Italian, and Spanifh languages; and fpoke the firft "fluently, and the other two tolerably well.

"He had likewife read moft of the Greek and "Roman hiftories in their original languages, and "moft that are wrote in Englifh, French, Italian, "and Spanifh. He had a good tafte in philofophy; "and, having a firm impreffion of religion upon his "mind, he took great delight in divinity and eccle- "fiaftical hiftory, in both which he made great ad- "vances in the times he retired into the country, "which was frequent. He expreffed, on all occa- "fions, his full perfuafion of the truth of Revealed "Religion; and being a fincere member of the "Eftablifhed Church himfelf, he pitied, but con- "demned not, thofe that diffented from it. He "abhorred the principles of perfecuting men upon "the account of their opinions in religion; and,

" being ſtrict in his own, he took it not upon him " to cenſure thoſe of another perſuaſion. His con- " verſation was pleaſant, witty, and learned, without " the leaſt tincture of affectation or pedantry; and " his inimitable manner of diverting and enlivening " the company made it impoſſible for any one to " be out of humour when he was in it. Envy and " detraction ſeemed to be entirely foreign to his " conſtitution; and whatever provocations he met " with at any time, he paſſed them over without the " leaſt thought of reſentment or revenge. As Homer " had a Zoilus, ſo Mr. Rowe had ſometimes his; " for there were not wanting malevolent people, and " pretenders to poetry too, that would now-and-then " bark at his beſt performances; but he was ſo much " conſcious of his own genius, and had ſo much " good-nature, as to forgive them; nor could he " ever be tempted to return them an anſwer.

" The love of learning and poetry made him not " the leſs fit for buſineſs, and nobody applied him- " ſelf cloſer to it, when it required his attendance. " The late duke of Queenſberry, when he was ſecre- " tary of ſtate, made him his ſecretary for publick " affairs; and when that truly great man came to " know him well, he was never ſo pleaſed as when " Mr. Rowe was in his company. After the duke's " death, all avenues were ſtopped to his preferment; " and, during the reſt of that reign, he paſſed his " time with the Muſes and his books, and ſometimes " the converſation of his friends.

" When he had juſt got to be eaſy in his fortune, " and was in a fair way to make it better, death " ſwept him away, and in him deprived the world of

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"one of the beſt men, as well as one of the beſt ge-
"niuſes, of the age. He died like a Chriſtian and a "Philoſopher, in charity with all mankind, and with "an abſolute reſignation to the will of God. He "kept up his good-humour to the laſt; and took "leave of his wife and friends, immediately before "his laſt agony, with the ſame tranquillity of mind, "and the ſame indifference for life, as though he "had been upon taking but a ſhort journey. He was "twice married; firſt to a daughter of Mr. Parſons, "one of the auditors of the revenue; and afterwards "to a daughter of Mr. Deveniſh, of a good family in "Dorſetſhire. By the firſt he had a ſon; and by the "ſecond a daughter, married afterwards to Mr. Fane. "He died the ſixth of December, 1718, in the forty-"fifth year of his age; and was buried the nine-"teenth of the ſame month in Weſtminſter-abbey, in "the aiſle where many of our Engliſh poets are in-"terred, over againſt Chaucer, his body being at-"tended by a ſelect number of his friends, and the "dean and choir officiating at the funeral."

To this character, which is apparently given with the fondneſs of a friend, may be added the teſtimony of Pope, who ſays, in a letter to Blount, "Mr. Rowe "accompanied me, and paſſed a week in the Foreſt. "I need not tell you how much a man of his turn "entertained me; but I muſt acquaint you, there is "a vivacity and gaiety of diſpoſition, almoſt pecu-"liar to him, which make it impoſſible to part from "him without that uneaſineſs which generally ſuc-"ceeds all our pleaſure."

Pope has left behind him another mention of his

companion, lefs advantageous, which is thus reported by Dr. Warburton :

"Rowe, in Mr. Pope's opinion, maintained a de-
"cent character, but had no heart. Mr. Addifon
"was juftly offended with fome behaviour which
"arofe from that want, and eftranged himfelf from
"him; which Rowe felt very feverely. Mr. Pope,
"their common friend, knowing this, took an op-
"portunity, at fome juncture of Mr. Addifon's ad-
"vancement, to tell him how poor Rowe was grieved
"at his difpleafure, and what fatisfaction he ex-
"preffed at Mr. Addifon's good fortune, which he
"expreffed fo naturally, that he (Mr. Pope) could
"not but think him fincere. Mr. Addifon replied,
"'I do not fufpect that he feigned; but the levity
"of his heart is fuch, that he is ftruck with any new
"adventure; and it would affect him juft in the
"fame manner, if he heard I was going to be
"hanged.'—Mr. Pope faid he could not deny but
"Mr. Addifon underftood Rowe well."

This cenfure time has not left us the power of confirming or refuting; but obfervation daily fhews, that much ftrefs is not to be laid on hyperbolical accufations, and pointed fentences, which even he that utters them defires to be applauded rather than credited. Addifon can hardly be fuppofed to have meant all that he faid. Few characters can bear the microfcopick fcrutiny of wit quickened by anger; and perhaps the beft advice to authors would be, that they fhould keep out of the way of one another.

Rowe is chiefly to be confidered as a tragick writer and a tranflator. In his attempt at comedy he failed

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ſo ignominiouſly, that his *Biter* is not inſerted in his works; and his occaſional poems and ſhort compoſitions are rarely worthy either praiſe or cenſure; for they ſeem the caſual ſports of a mind ſeeking rather to amuſe its leiſure than to exerciſe its powers.

In the conſtruction of his dramas, there is not much art; he is not a nice obſerver of the Unities. He extends time and varies places as his convenience requires. To vary the place is not, in my opinion, any violation of Nature, if the change be made between the acts; for it is no leſs eaſy for the ſpectator to ſuppoſe himſelf at Athens in the ſecond act, than at Thebes in the firſt; but to change the ſcene, as is done by Rowe, in the middle of an act, is to add more acts to the play, ſince an act is ſo much of the buſineſs as is tranſacted without interruption. Rowe, by this licence, eaſily extricates himſelf from difficulties; as in *Jane Gray*, when we have been terrified with all the dreadful pomp of publick execution, and are wondering how the heroine or the poet will proceed, no ſooner has *Jane* pronounced ſome prophetick rhymes, than—paſs and be gone—the ſcene cloſes, and *Pembroke* and *Gardiner* are turned out upon the ſtage.

I know not that there can be found in his plays any deep ſearch into nature, any accurate diſcriminations of kindred qualities, or nice diſplay of paſſion in its progreſs; all is general and undefined. Nor does he much intereſt or affect the auditor, except in *Jane Shore*, who is always ſeen and heard with pity. *Alicia* is a character of empty noiſe, with no reſemblance to real ſorrow or to natural madneſs.

Whence, then, has Rowe his reputation? From the reasonableness and propriety of some of his scenes, from the elegance of his diction, and the suavity of his verse. He seldom moves either pity or terrour, but he often elevates the sentiments; he seldom pierces the breast, but he always delights the ear, and often improves the understanding.

His translation of the *Golden Verses*, and of the first book of *Quillet's* Poem, have nothing in them remarkable. The *Golden Verses* are tedious.

The version of *Lucan* is one of the greatest productions of English poetry; for there is perhaps none that so completely exhibits the genius and spirit of the original. *Lucan* is distinguished by a kind of dictatorial or philosophick dignity, rather, as Quintilian observes, declamatory than poetical; full of ambitious morality and pointed sentences, comprised in vigorous and animated lines. This character Rowe has very diligently and successfully preserved. His versification, which is such as his contemporaries practised, without any attempt at innovation or improvement, seldom wants either melody or force. His author's sense is sometimes a little diluted by additional infusions, and sometimes weakened by too much expansion. But such faults are to be expected in all translations, from the constraint of measures and dissimilitude of languages. The *Pharsalia* of Rowe deserves more notice than it obtains, and as it is more read will be more esteemed.

ADDI-

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S

ADDISON.

JOSEPH ADDISON was born on the firſt of May 1672, at Milſton, of which his father, Lancelot Addiſon, was then rector, near Ambroſebury in Wiltſhire, and appearing weak and unlikely to live, he was chriſtened the ſame day. After the uſual domeſtick education, which from the character of his father may be reaſonably ſuppoſed to have given him ſtrong impreſſions of piety, he was committed to the care of Mr. Naiſh at Ambroſebury, and afterwards of Mr. Taylor at Saliſbury.

Not to name the ſchool or the maſters of men illuſtrious for literature, is a kind of hiſtorical fraud, by which honeſt fame is injuriouſly diminiſhed: I would therefore trace him through the whole proceſs of his education. In 1683, in the beginning of his twelfth year, his father, being made dean of Lichfield, naturally carried his family to his new reſidence, and, I believe, placed him for ſome time, probably not long, under Mr. Shaw, then maſter of the ſchool at Litchfield, father of the late Dr. Peter

Shaw. Of this interval his biographers have given no account, and I know it only from a ſtory of a *barring-out*, told me, when I was a boy, by Andrew Corbet of Shropſhire, who had heard it from Mr. Pigot his uncle.

The practice of *barring-out* was a ſavage licence, practiſed in many ſchools to the end of the laſt century, by which the boys, when the periodical vacation drew near, growing petulant at the approach of liberty, ſome days before the time of regular receſs, took poſſeſſion of the ſchool, of which they barred the doors, and bade their maſter defiance from the windows. It is not eaſy to ſuppoſe, that on ſuch occaſions the maſter would do more than laugh; yet, if tradition may be credited, he often ſtruggled hard to force or ſurpriſe the garriſon. The maſter, when Pigot was a ſchool-boy, was *barred-out* at Lichfield; and the whole operation, as he ſaid, was planned and conducted by Addiſon.

To judge better of the probability of this ſtory, I have enquired when he was ſent to the Chartreux; but, as he was not one of thoſe who enjoyed the Founder's benefaction, there is no account preſerved of his admiſſion. At the ſchool of the Chartreux, to which he was removed either from that of Saliſbury or Lichfield, he purſued his juvenile ſtudies under the care of Dr. Ellis, and contracted that intimacy with Sir Richard Steele, which their joint labours have ſo effectually recorded.

Of this memorable friendſhip the greater praiſe muſt be given to Steele. It is not hard to love thoſe from whom nothing can be feared; and Addiſon never conſidered Steele as a rival; but Steele lived,

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as he confeffes, under an habitual fubjection to the predominating genius of Addifon, whom he always mentioned with reverence, and treated with obfequioufnefs.

Addifon *, who knew his own dignity, could not always forbear to fhew it, by playing a little upon his admirer; but he was in no danger of retort: his jefts were endured without refiftance or refentment.

But the fneer of jocularity was not the worft. Steele, whofe imprudence of generofity, or vanity of profufion, kept him always incurably neceffitous, upon fome preffing exigence, in an evil hour, borrowed an hundred pounds of his friend, probably without much purpofe of repayment; but Addifon, who feems to have had other notions of a hundred pounds, grew impatient of delay, and reclaimed his loan by an execution. Steele felt with great fenfibility the obduracy of his creditor, but with emotions of forrow rather than of anger †.

In 1687 he was entered into Queen's College in Oxford, where, in 1689, the accidental perufal of fome Latin verfes gained him the patronage of Dr. Lancafter, afterwards provoft of Queen's College; by whofe recommendation he was elected into Mag-

* Spence.

† This fact was communicated to Johnfon in my hearing by a perfon of unqueftionable veracity, but whofe name I am not at liberty to mention. He had it, as he told us, from lady Primrofe, to whom Steele related it with tears in his eyes. The late Dr. Stinton confirmed it to me, by faying, that he had heard it from Mr. Hooke, author of the Roman Hiftory; and he, from Mr. Pope. H.

See, Victor's Letters, vol. I. p. 328, this tranfaction fomewhat differently related.

dalen

dalen College as a Demy, a term by which that society denominates those which are elsewhere called Scholars; young men, who partake of the founder's benefaction, and succeed in their order to vacant fellowships *.

Here he continued to cultivate poetry and criticism, and grew first eminent by his Latin compositions, which are indeed entitled to particular praise. He has not confined himself to the imitation of any ancient author, but has formed his style from the general language, such as a diligent perusal of the productions of different ages happened to supply.

His latin compositions seem to have had much of his fondness, for he collected a second volume of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*, perhaps for a convenient receptacle, in which all his Latin pieces are inserted, and where his Poem on the Peace has the first place. He afterwards presented the collection to Boileau, who, from that time, "conceived," says Tickell, "an opinion "of the English genius for poetry." Nothing is better known of Boileau, than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin, and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation.

Three of his Laitn poems are upon subjects on which perhaps he would not have ventured to have written in his own language. *The Battle of the Pigmies and Cranes*; *The Barometer*; and *A Bowling-green*. When the matter is low or scanty, a dead language, in which nothing is mean because nothing

* He took the degree of M. A. Feb. 14, 1693.

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is familiar, affords great conveniences; and, by the ſonorous magnificence of Roman ſyllables, the writer conceals penury of thought, and want of novelty, often from the reader, and often from himſelf.

In his twenty-ſecond year he firſt ſhewed his power of Engliſh poetry by ſome verſes addreſſed to Dryden; and ſoon after publiſhed a tranſlation of the greater part of the Fourth Georgick upon Bees; after which, ſays Dryden, "my latter ſwarm is hardly "worth the hiving."

About the ſame time he compoſed the arguments prefixed to the ſeveral books of Dryden's Virgil; and produced an Eſſay on the Georgicks, juvenile, ſuperficial, and uninſtructive, without much either of the ſcholar's learning or the critick's penetration.

His next paper of verſes contained a character of the principal Engliſh poets, inſcribed to Henry Sacheverell, who was then, if not a poet, a writer of verſes *; as is ſhewn by his verſion of a ſmall part of

* A letter which I found among Dr. Johnſon's papers, dated in January 1784, from a lady in Wiltſhire, contains a diſcovery of ſome importance in literary hiſtory, viz. that by the initials H. S. prefixed to the poem, we are not to underſtand the famous Dr. Henry Sacheverell, whoſe trial is the moſt remarkable incident in his life. The information thus communicated is, that the verſes in queſtion were not an addreſs to the famous Dr. Sacheverell, but to a very ingenious gentleman of the ſame name, who died young, ſuppoſed to be a Mankſman, for that he wrote the hiſtory of the Iſle of Man.—That this perſon left his papers to Mr. Addiſon, and had formed a plan of a tragedy upon the death of Socrates.—The lady ſays, ſhe had this information from a Mr. Stephens, who was a fellow of Merton College, a contemporary and intimate with Mr. Addiſon in Oxford, who died, near 50 years ago, a prebendary of Wincheſter. H.

Virgil's

Virgil's Georgicks, publiſhed in the Miſcellanies; and a Latin encomium on Queen Mary, in the *Muſæ Anglicanæ*. Theſe verſes exhibit all the fondneſs of friendſhip; but, on one ſide or the other, friendſhip was afterwards too weak for the malignity of faction.

In this poem is a very confident and diſcriminate character of Spenſer, whoſe work he had then never read *. So little ſometimes is criticiſm the effect of judgement. It is neceſſary to inform the reader, that about this time he was introduced by Congreve to Montague, then Chancellor of the Exchequer: Addiſon was then learning the trade of a courtier, and ſubjoined Montague as a poetical name to thoſe of Cowley and of Dryden.

By the influence of Mr. Montague, concurring, according to Tickell, with his natural modeſty, he was diverted from his original deſign of entering into holy orders. Montague alleged the corruption of men who engaged in civil employments without liberal education; and declared, that, though he was repreſented as an enemy to the Church, he would never do it any injury but by with-holding Addiſon from it.

Soon after (in 1695) he wrote a poem to king William, with a rhyming introduction addreſſed to lord Somers. King William had no regard to elegance or literature; his ſtudy was only war; yet by a choice of miniſters, whoſe diſpoſition was very different from his own, he procured, without intention, a very liberal patronage to poetry. Addiſon was careſſed both by Somers and Montague.

* Spence.

In

In 1697 appeared his Latin verses on the peace of Ryswick, which he dedicated to Montague, and which was afterwards called, by Smith, "the best "Latin poem since the Æneid." Praise must not be too rigorously examined; but the performance cannot be denied to be vigorous and elegant.

Having yet no publick employment, he obtained (in 1699) a pension of three hundred pounds a year, that he might be enabled to travel. He staid a year at Blois *, probably to learn the French language; and then proceeded in his journey to Italy, which he surveyed with the eyes of a poet.

While he was travelling at leisure, he was far from being idle: for he not only collected his observations on the country, but found time to write his Dialogues on Medals, and four Acts of Cato. Such at least is the relation of Tickell. Perhaps he only collected his materials, and formed his plan.

Whatever were his other employments in Italy, he there wrote the letter to lord Halifax, which is justly considered as the most elegant, if not the most sublime, of his poetical productions. But in about two years he found it necessary to hasten home; being, as Swift informs us, distressed by indigence, and compelled to become the tutor of a travelling Squire, because his pension was not remitted.

At his return he published his Travels, with a dedication to lord Somers. As his stay in foreign countries was short, his observations are such as might be supplied by a hasty view, and consist chiefly in comparisons of the present face of the

* Spence.

country with the descriptions left us by the Roman poets, from whom he made preparatory collections, though he might have spared the trouble, had he known that such collections had been made twice before by Italian authors.

The most amusing passage of his book is his account of the minute republick of San Marino; of many parts it is not a very severe censure to say, that they might have been written at home. His elegance of language, and variegation of prose and verse, however, gains upon the reader; and the book, though a while neglected, became in time so much the favourite of the publick, that before it was reprinted it rose to five times its price.

When he returned to England (in 1702), with a meanness of appearance which gave testimony of the difficulties to which he had been reduced, he found his old patrons out of power, and was therefore, for a time, at full leisure for the cultivation of his mind, and a mind so cultivated gives reason to believe that little time was lost.

But he remained not long neglected or useless. The victory at Blenheim (1704) spread triumph and confidence over the nation; and lord Godolphin, lamenting to lord Halifax, that it had not been celebrated in a manner equal to the subject, desired him to propose it to some better poet. Halifax told him, that there was no encouragement for genius; that worthless men were unprofitably enriched with publick money, without any care to find or employ those whose appearance might do honour to their country. To this Godolphin replied, that such abuses should in time be rectified; and that, if a

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man could be found capable of the taſk then propoſed, he ſhould not want an ample recompenſe. Halifax then named Addiſon, but required that the Treaſurer ſhould apply to him in his own perſon. Godolphin ſent the meſſage by Mr. Boyle, afterwards lord Carlton; and Addiſon, having undertaken the work, communicated it to the Treaſurer, while it was yet advanced no further than the ſimile of the Angel, and was immediately rewarded by ſucceeding Mr. Locke in the place of *Commiſſioner of Appeals*.

In the following year he was at Hanover with lord Halifax: and the year after he was made under-ſecretary of ſtate, firſt to Sir Charles Hedges, and in a few months more to the earl of Sunderland.

About this time the prevalent taſte for Italian operas inclined him to try what would be the effect of a muſical Drama in our own language. He therefore wrote the opera of Roſamond, which, when exhibited on the ſtage, was either hiſſed or neglected; but, truſting that the readers would do him more juſtice, he publiſhed it, with an inſcription to the dutcheſs of Marlborough; a woman without ſkill, or pretenſions to ſkill, in poetry or literature. His dedication was therefore an inſtance of ſervile abſurdity, to be exceeded only by Joſhua Barnes's dedication of a Greek Anacreon to the Duke.

His reputation had been ſomewhat advanced by *The Tender Huſband*, a comedy which Steele dedicated to him, with a confeſſion that he owed to him ſeveral of the moſt ſucceſsful ſcenes. To this play Addiſon ſupplied a prologue.

When the marquis of Wharton was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, Addiſon attended him as his ſecretary; and was made keeper of the records in Birmingham's Tower, with a ſalary of three hundred

 pounds

pounds a year. The office was little more than nominal, and the salary was augmented for his accommodation.

Interest and faction allow little to the operation of particular dispositions, or private opinions. Two men of personal characters, more opposite than those of Wharton and Addison, could not easily be brought together. Wharton was impious, profligate, and shameless, without regard, or appearance of regard, to right and wrong *: whatever is contrary to this may be said of Addison; but as agents of a party they were connected, and how they adjusted their other sentiments we cannot know.

Addison must however not be too hastily condemned. It is not necessary to refuse benefits from a bad man, when the acceptance implies no approbation of his crimes; nor has the subordinate officer any obligation to examine the opinions or conduct of those under whom he acts, except that he may not be made the instrument of wickedness. It is reasonable to suppose that Addison counteracted, as far as he was able, the malignant and blasting influence of the Lieutenant; and that at least by his intervention some good was done, and some mischief prevented.

When he was in office, he made a law to himself, as Swift has recorded, never to remit his regular fees in civility to his friends: "For," said he, "I "may have a hundred friends; and, if my fee be "two guineas, I shall, by relinquishing my right, "lose two hundred guineas, and no friend gain more "than two; there is therefore no proportion between "the good imparted and the evil suffered."

* Dr. Johnson appears to have blended the character of the Marquis with that of his son the Duke. N.

He

He was in Ireland when Steele, without any communication of his defign, began the publication of the Tatler: but he was not long concealed; by inferting a remark on Virgil, which Addifon had given him, he difcovered himfelf. It is indeed not eafy for any man to write upon literature or common life, fo as not to make himfelf known to thofe with whom he familiarly converfes, and who are acquainted with his track of ftudy, his favourite topick, his peculiar notions, and his habitual phrafes.

If Steele defired to write in fecret, he was not lucky; a fingle month detected him. His firft Tatler was publifhed April 22 (1709); and Addifon's contribution appeared May 26. Tickell obferves, that the Tatler began and was concluded without his concurrence. This is doubtlefs literally true; but the work did not fuffer much by his unconfcioufnefs of its commencement, or his abfence at its ceffation; for he continued his affiftance to December 23, and the paper ftopped on January 2. He did not diftinguifh his pieces by any fignature; and I know not whether his name was not kept fecret till the papers were collected into volumes.

To the Tatler, in about two months, fucceeded the Spectator; a feries of effays of the fame kind, but written with lefs levity, upon a more regular plan, and publifhed daily. Such an undertaking fhewed the writers not to diftruft their own copioufnefs of materials or facility of compofition, and their performance juftified their confidence. They found however, in their progrefs, many auxiliaries. To attempt a fingle paper was no terrifying labour; many pieces were offered, and many were received.

Addiſon had enough of the zeal of party; but Steele had at that time almoſt nothing elſe. The Spectator, in one of the firſt papers, ſhewed the political tenets of its authors; but a reſolution was ſoon taken, of courting general approbation by general topicks, and ſubjects on which faction had produced no diverſity of ſentiments; ſuch as literature, morality, and familiar life. To this practice they adhered with few deviations. The ardour of Steele once broke out in praiſe of Marlborough; and when Dr. Fleetwood prefixed to ſome ſermons a preface, overflowing with whiggiſh opinions, that it might be read by the Queen *, it was reprinted in the Spectator.

To teach the minuter decencies and inferior duties, to regulate the practice of daily converſation, to correct thoſe depravities which are rather ridiculous than criminal, and remove thoſe grievances which, if they produce no laſting calamities, impreſs hourly vexation, was firſt attempted by Caſa in his book of *Manners*, and Caſtiglione in his *Courtier*; two books yet celebrated in Italy for purity and elegance, and which, if they are now leſs read, are neglected only becauſe they have effected that reformation which their authors intended, and their precepts now are no longer wanted. Their uſefulneſs to the age in which they were written is ſufficiently atteſted by the tranſlations which almoſt all the nations of Europe were in haſte to obtain.

* This particular number of the Spectator, it is ſaid, was not publiſhed till twelve o'clock, that it might come out preciſely at the hour of her Majeſty's breakfaſt, and that no time might be left for deliberating about ſerving it up with that meal, as uſual. See edit. of the TATLER with notes, vol. VI. N°. 271, *note*. p. 452, &c. N.

This

This ſpecies of inſtruction was continued, and perhaps advanced, by the French; among whom La Bruyere's Manners of the Age, though, as Boileau remarked, it is written without connection, certainly deſerves praiſe, for livelineſs of deſcription, and juſtneſs of obſervation.

Before the Tatler and Spectator, if the writers for the theatre are excepted, England had no maſters of common life. No writers had yet undertaken to reform either the ſavageneſs of neglect, or the impertinence of civility; to ſhew when to ſpeak, or to be ſilent; how to refuſe, or how to comply. We had many books to teach us our more important duties, and to ſettle opinions in philoſophy or politicks; but an *Arbiter Elegantiarum*, a judge of propriety, was yet wanting, who ſhould ſurvey the track of daily converſation, and free it from thorns and prickles, which teaze the paſſer, though they do not wound him.

For this purpoſe nothing is ſo proper as the frequent publication of ſhort papers, which we read not as ſtudy but amuſement. If the ſubject be ſlight, the treatiſe is ſhort. The buſy may find time, and the idle may find patience.

This mode of conveying cheap and eaſy knowledge began among us in the Civil War *, when it was

* Newſpapers appear to have had an earlier date than here aſſigned. Cleiveland, in his Character of a London Diurnal, ſays, "The original ſinner of this kind was Dutch; Gallo-belgicus the "Protoplas, and the Modern Mercuries but Hans en kelders." Some intelligence given by Mercurius Gallo-belgicus is mentioned in Carew's Survey of Cornwall, p. 126, originally publiſhed in 1602. Theſe vehicles of information are often mentioned in the plays of James and Charles the Firſt. R.

much the intereſt of either party to raiſe and fix the prejudices of the people. At that time appeared Mercurius Aulicus, Mercurius Ruſticus, and Mercurius Civicus. It is ſaid, that when any title grew popular, it was ſtolen by the antagoniſt, who by this ſtratagem conveyed his notions to thoſe who would not have received him had he not worn the appearance of a friend. The tumult of thoſe unhappy days left ſcarcely any man leiſure to treaſure up occaſional compoſitions; and ſo much were they neglected, that a complete collection is no where to be found.

Theſe Mercuries were ſucceeded by L'Eſtrange's Obſervator; and that by Leſley's Rehearſal, and perhaps by others; but hitherto nothing had been conveyed to the people, in this commodious manner, but controverſy relating to the Church or State; of which they taught many to talk, whom they could not teach to judge.

It has been ſuggeſted, that the Royal Society was inſtituted ſoon after the Reſtoration, to divert the attention of the people from publick diſcontent. The Tatler and Spectator had the ſame tendency; they were publiſhed at a time when two parties, loud, reſtleſs, and violent, each with plauſible declarations, and each perhaps without any diſtinct termination of its views, were agitating the nation; to minds heated with political conteſt they ſupplied cooler and more inoffenſive reflections; and it is ſaid by Addiſon, in a ſubſequent work, that they had a perceptible influence upon the converſation of that time, and taught the frolick and the gay to unite merriment with decency; an effect which they can never wholly loſe, while they continue to be among

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the firſt books by which both ſexes are initiated in the elegances of knowledge.

The Tatler and Spectator adjuſted, like Caſa, the unſettled practice of daily intercourſe by propriety and politeneſs; and, like La Bruyere, exhibited the *Characters and Manners of the Age.* The perſonages introduced in theſe papers were not merely ideal; they were then known, and conſpicuous in various ſtations. Of the Tatler this is told by Steele in his laſt paper; and of the Spectator by Budgel in the preface to Theophraſtus, a book which Addiſon has recommended, and which he was ſuſpected to have reviſed, if he did not write it. Of thoſe portraits, which may be ſuppoſed to be ſometimes embelliſhed, and ſometimes aggravated, the originals are now partly known, and partly forgotten.

But to ſay that they united the plans of two or three eminent writers, is to give them but a ſmall part of their due praiſe; they ſuperadded literature and criticiſm, and ſometimes towered far above their predeceſſors; and taught, with great juſtneſs of argument and dignity of language, the moſt important duties and ſublime truths.

All theſe topicks were happily varied with elegant fictions and refined allegories, and illuminated with different changes of ſtyle and felicities of invention.

It is recorded by Budgell, that of the characters feigned or exhibited in the Spectator, the favourite of Addiſon was Sir Roger de Coverley, of whom he had formed a very delicate and diſcriminate idea, which he would not ſuffer to be violated; and therefore, when Steele had ſhewn him innocently picking up a girl in the Temple, and taking her to a tavern,

he drew upon himfelf fo much of his friend's indignation, thas he was forced to appeafe him by a promife of forbearing Sir Roger for the time to come.

The reafon which induced Cervantes to bring his hero to the grave, *para mi fola nacio Don Quixote, y yo para el*, made Addifon declare, with undue vehemence of expreffion, that he would kill Sir Roger; being of opinion that they were born for one another, and that any other hand would do him wrong.

It may be doubted whether Addifon ever filled up his original delineation. He defcribes his Knight as having his imagination fomewhat warped; but of this perverfion he has made very little ufe. The irregularities in Sir Roger's conduct feem not fo much the effects of a mind deviating from the beaten track of life, by the perpetual preffure of fome overwhelming idea, as of habitual rufticity, and that negligence which folitary grandeur naturally generates.

The variable weather of the mind, the flying vapours of incipient madnefs, which from time to time cloud reafon, without eclipfing it, it requires fo much nicety to exhibit, that Addifon feems to have been deterred from profecuting his own defign.

To Sir Roger, who, as a country gentleman, appears to be a Tory, or, as it is gently expreffed, an adherent to the landed intereft, is oppofed Sir Andrew Freeport, a new man, a wealthy merchant, zealous for the moneyed intereft, and a Whig. Of this contrariety of opinions, it is probable more confequences were at firft intended than could be produced when the refolution was taken to exclude party from the paper. Sir Andrew does but little, and that

that little seems not to have pleased Addison, who, when he dismissed him from the club, changed his opinions. Steele had made him, in the true spirit of unfeeling commerce, declare that he "would not "build an hospital for idle people;" but at last he buys land, settles in the country, and builds not a manufactory, but an hospital for twelve old husbandmen, for men with whom a merchant has little acquaintance, and whom he commonly considers with little kindness.

Of essays thus elegant, thus instructive, and thus commodiously distributed, it is natural to suppose the approbation general, and the sale numerous. I once heard it observed, that the sale may be calculated by the product of the tax, related in the last number to produce more than twenty pounds a week, and therefore stated at one-and-twenty pounds, or three pounds ten shillings a day: this, at a halfpenny a paper, will give sixteen hundred and eighty* for the daily number.

This sale is not great; yet this, if Swift be credited, was likely to grow less; for he declares that the Spectator, whom he ridicules for his endless mention of the *fair sex*, had before his recess wearied his readers.

The next year (1713), in which Cato came upon the stage, was the grand climacterick of Addison's reputation. Upon the death of Cato, he had, as is said, planned a tragedy in the time of his travels,

* That this calculation is not exaggerated, that it is even much below the real number, see the notes on the Tatler, ed. 1786, vol. VI. p. 452. N.

and had for ſeveral years the four firſt acts finiſhed, which were ſhewn to ſuch as were likely to ſpread their admiration. They were ſeen by Pope, and by Cibber, who relates that Steele, when he took back the copy, told him, in the deſpicable cant of literary modeſty, that, whatever ſpirit his friend had ſhewn in the compoſition, he doubted whether he would have courage ſufficient to expoſe it to the cenſure of a Britiſh audience.

The time however was now come, when thoſe, who affected to think liberty in danger, affected likewiſe to think that a ſtage-play might preſerve it; and Addiſon was importuned, in the name of the tutelary deities of Britain, to ſhew his courage and his zeal by finiſhing his deſign.

To reſume his work he ſeemed perverſely and unaccountably unwilling; and by a requeſt, which perhaps he wiſhed to be denied, deſired Mr. Hughes to add a fifth act. Hughes ſuppoſed him ſerious; and, undertaking the ſupplement, brought in a few days ſome ſcenes for his examination; but he had in the mean time gone to work himſelf, and produced half an act, which he afterwards completed, but with brevity irregularly diſproportionate to the foregoing parts, like a taſk performed with reluctance, and hurried to its concluſion.

It may yet be doubted whether Cato was made publick by any change of the author's purpoſe; for Dennis charged him with raiſing prejudices in his own favour by falſe poſitions of preparatory criticiſm, and with *poiſoning the town* by contradicting in the Spectator the eſtabliſhed rule of poetical juſtice, becauſe his own hero, with all his virtues, was

to fall before a tyrant. The fact is certain; the motives we muſt gueſs.

Addiſon was, I believe, ſufficiently diſpoſed to bar all avenues againſt all danger. When Pope brought him the prologue, which is properly accommodated to the play, there were theſe words, "Britons, ariſe! "be worth like this approved;" meaning nothing more than, Britons, erect and exalt yourſelves to the approbation of public virtue. Addiſon was frighted, leſt he ſhould be thought a promoter of inſurrection, and the line was liquidated to "Britons, attend."

Now, "heavily in clouds came on the day, the "great, the important day," when Addiſon was to ſtand the hazard of the theatre. That there might, however, be left as little hazard as was poſſible, on the firſt night Steele, as himſelf relates, undertook to pack an audience. This, ſays Pope*, had been tried for the firſt time in favour of the Diſtreſt Mother; and was now, with more efficacy, practiſed for Cato.

The danger was ſoon over. The whole nation was at that time on fire with faction. The Whigs applauded evety line in which Liberty was mentioned, as a ſatire on the Tories; and the Tories echoed every clap, to ſhew that the ſatire was unfelt. The ſtory of Bolingbroke is well known. He called Booth to his box, and gave him fifty guineas for defending the cauſe of Liberty ſo well againſt a perpetual dictator. The Whigs, ſays Pope, deſign a ſecond preſent, when they can accompany it with as good a ſentence.

* Spence.

The

The play, supported thus by the emulation of factious praise, was acted night after night for a longer time than, I believe, the publick had allowed to any drama before; and the author, as Mrs. Porter long afterwards related, wandered through the whole exhibition behind the scenes with restless and unappeasable solicitude.

When it was printed, notice was given that the Queen would be pleased if it was dedicated to her; "but, as he had designed that compliment elsewhere, he found himself obliged," says Tickell, "by his duty on the one hand, and his honour on the other, to send it into the world without any dedication."

Human happiness has always its abatements; the brightest sun-shine of success is not without a cloud. No sooner was Cato offered to the reader, than it was attacked by the acute malignity of Dennis, with all the violence of angry criticism. Dennis, though equally zealous, and probably by his temper more furious than Addison, for what they called liberty, and though a flatterer of the Whig ministry, could not sit quiet at a successful play; but was eager to tell friends and enemies, that they had misplaced their admirations. The world was too stubborn for instruction; with the fate of the censurer of Corneille's Cid, his animadversions shewed his anger without effect, and Cato continued to be praised.

Pope had now an opportunity of courting the friendship of Addison, by vilifying his old enemy, and could give resentment its full play without appearing to revenge himself. He therefore published *A Narrative of the Madness of John Dennis*; a performance

formance which left the objections to the play in their full force, and therefore diſcovered more deſire of vexing the critick than of defending the poet.

Addiſon, who was no ſtranger to the world, probably ſaw the ſelfiſhneſs of Pope's friendſhip; and, reſolving that he ſhould have the conſequences of his officiouſneſs to himſelf, informed Dennis by Steele, that he was ſorry for the inſult; and that, whenever he ſhould think fit to anſwer his remarks, he would do it in a manner to which nothing could be objected.

The greateſt weakneſs of the play is in the ſcenes of love, which are ſaid by Pope * to have been added to the original plan upon a ſubſequent review, in compliance with the popular practice of the ſtage. Such an authority it is hard to reject; yet the love is ſo intimately mingled with the whole action, that it cannot eaſily be thought extrinſick and adventitious; for, if it were taken away, what would be left? or how were the four acts filled in the firſt draught?

At the publication the Wits ſeemed proud to pay their attendance with encomiaſtick verſes. The beſt are from an unknown hand, which will perhaps loſe ſomewhat of their praiſe when the author is known to be Jeffreys.

Cato had yet other honours. It was cenſured as a party-play by a *Scholar of Oxford*; and defended in a favourable examination by Dr. Sewel. It was tranſlated by Salvini into Italian, and acted at Florence; and by the Jeſuits of St. Omer's into Latin,

* Spence.

and

and played by their pupils. Of this verſion a copy was ſent to Mr. Addiſon: it is to be wiſhed that it could be found for the ſake of comparing their verſion of the ſoliloquy with that of Bland.

A tragedy was written on the ſame ſubject by Des Champs, a French poet, which was tranſlated with a criticiſm on the Engliſh play. But the tranſlator and the critick are now forgotten.

Dennis lived on unanſwered, and therefore little read. Addiſon knew the policy of literature too well to make his enemy important by drawing the attention of the publick upon a criticiſm, which, though ſometimes intemperate, was often irrefragable.

While Cato was upon the ſtage, another daily paper, called *The Guardian*, was publiſhed by Steele. To this Addiſon gave great aſſiſtance, whether occaſionally or by previous engagement is not known.

The character of Guardian was too narrow and too ſerious: it might properly enough admit both the duties and the decencies of life, but ſeemed not to include literary ſpeculations, and was in ſome degree violated by merriment and burleſque. What had the Guardian of the Lizards to do with clubs of tall or of little men, with neſts of ants, or with Strada's prolufions?

Of this paper nothing is neceſſary to be ſaid, but that it found many contributors, and that it was a continuation of the Spectator, with the ſame elegance, and the ſame variety, till ſome unlucky ſparkle from a Tory paper ſet Steele's politicks on fire, and wit at once blazed into faction. He was ſoon too

hot

hot for neutral topicks, and quitted the *Guardian* to write the *Englishman*.

The papers of Addison are marked in the Spectator by one of the letters in the name of *Clio*, and in the Guardian by *a hand*; whether it was, as Tickell pretends to think, that he was unwilling to usurp the praise of others, or, as Steele, with far greater likelihood, insinuates, that he could not without discontent impart to others any of his own. I have heard that his avidity did not satisfy itself with the air of renown, but that with great eagerness he laid hold on his proportion of the profits.

Many of these papers were written with powers truly comick, with nice discrimination of characters, and accurate observation of natural or accidental deviations from propriety; but it was not supposed that he had tried a comedy on the stage, till Steele after his death declared him the author of the *Drummer*. This however Steele did not know to be true by any direct testimony; for, when Addison put the play into his hands, he only told him, it was the work of a "Gentleman in the Company;" and when it was received, as is confessed, with cold disapprobation, he was probably less willing to claim it. Tickell omitted it in his collection; but the testimony of Steele, and the total silence of any other claimant, has determined the publick to assign it to Addison, and it is now printed with his other poetry. Steele carried the *Drummer* to the play-house, and afterwards to the press, and sold the copy for fifty guineas.

To the opinion of Steele may be added the proof supplied by the play itself, of which the characters

are ſuch as Addiſon would have delineated, and the tendency ſuch as Addiſon would have promoted. That it ſhould have been ill received would raiſe wonder, did we not daily ſee the capricious diſtribution of theatrical praiſe.

He was not all this time an indifferent ſpectator of publick affairs. He wrote, as different exigencies required (in 1707), *The preſent State of the War, and the Neceſſity of an Augmentation*; which, however judicious, being written on temporary topicks, and exhibiting no peculiar powers, laid hold on no attention, and has naturally ſunk by its own weight into neglect. This cannot be ſaid of the few papers entitled *The Whig Examiner*, in which is employed all the force of gay malevolence and humourous ſatire. Of this paper, which juſt appeared and expired, Swift remarks, with exultation, that "it is now "down among the dead men *." He might well rejoice at the death of that which he could not have killed. Every reader of every party, ſince perſonal malice is paſt, and the papers which once inflamed the nation are read only as effuſions of wit, muſt wiſh for more of the *Whig Examiners*; for on no occaſion was the genius of Addiſon more vigorouſly exerted, and on none did the ſuperiority of his powers more evidently appear. His *Trial of Count Tariff*, written to expoſe the Treaty of Commerce with France, lived no longer than the queſtion that produced it.

* From a Tory ſong in vogue at the time, the burthen whereof is,

And he, that will this health deny,
Down among the dead men let him lie. H.

Not long afterwards, an attempt was made to revive the *Spectator*, at a time indeed by no means favourable to literature, when the ſucceſſion of a new family to the throne filled the nation with anxiety, diſcord, and confuſion; and either the turbulence of the times, or the ſatiety of the readers, put a ſtop to the publication, after an experiment of eighty numbers, which were actually collected into an eighth volume, perhaps more valuable than any of thoſe that went before it. Addiſon produced more than a fourth part; and the other contributors are by no means unworthy of appearing as his aſſociates. The time that had paſſed during the ſuſpenſion of the *Spectator*, though it had not leſſened his power of humour, ſeems to have increaſed his diſpoſition to ſeriouſneſs: the proportion of his religious to his comick papers is greater than in the former ſeries.

The *Spectator*, from its re-commencement, was publiſhed only three times a week; and no diſcriminative marks were added to the papers. To Addiſon Tickell has aſcribed twenty-three *.

The *Spectator* had many contributors; and Steele, whoſe negligence kept him always in a hurry, when it was his turn to furniſh a paper, called loudly for the Letters, of which Addiſon, whoſe materials were more, made little uſe; having recourſe to ſketches and hints, the product of his former ſtudies, which he now reviewed and completed: among theſe are named by Tickell the *Eſſays* on *Wit*, thoſe on the

* Numb. 556, 557, 558, 559. 561, 562. 565. 567, 568, 569. 571. 574, 575. 579 580. 582, 583, 584, 585. 590. 592. 598. 600.

Pleaſures of the *Imagination*, and the *Criticiſm* on *Milton*.

When the Houſe of Hanover took poſſeſſion of the throne, it was reaſonable to expect that the zeal of Addiſon would be ſuitably rewarded. Before the arrival of King George, he was made ſecretary to the regency, and was required by his office to ſend notice to Hanover that the Queen was dead, and that the throne was vacant. To do this would not have been difficult to any man but Addiſon, who was ſo overwhelmed with the greatneſs of the event, and ſo diſtracted by choice of expreſſion, that the lords, who could not wait for the niceties of criticiſm, called Mr. Southwell, a clerk in the houſe, and ordered him to diſpatch the meſſage. Southwell readily told what was neceſſary in the common ſtyle of buſineſs, and valued himſelf upon having done what was too hard for Addiſon.

He was better qualified for the *Freeholder*, a paper which he publiſhed twice a week, from Dec. 23, 1715, to the middle of the next year. This was undertaken in defence of the eſtabliſhed government, ſometimes with argument, and ſometimes with mirth. In argument he had many equals; but his humour was ſingular and matchleſs. Bigotry itſelf muſt be delighted with the Tory Fox-hunter.

There are however ſome ſtrokes leſs elegant, and leſs decent; ſuch as the Pretender's Journal, in which one topick of ridicule is his poverty. This mode of abuſe had been employed by Milton againſt king Charles II.

"— — — — — — *Jacobæi*.
"Centum exulantis viſcera marſupii regis."

And

And Oldmixon delights to tell of ſome alderman of London, that he had more money than the exiled princes; but that which might be expected from Milton's ſavageneſs, or Oldmixon's meanneſs, was not ſuitable to the delicacy of Addiſon.

Steele thought the humour of the *Freeholder* too nice and gentle for ſuch noiſy times; and is reported to have ſaid, that the miniſtry made uſe of a lute, when they ſhould have called for a trumpet.

This year (1716 *) he married the counteſs dowager of Warwick, whom he had ſolicited by a very long and anxious courtſhip, perhaps with behaviour not very unlike that of Sir Roger to his diſdainful widow; and who, I am afraid, diverted herſelf often by playing with his paſſion. He is ſaid to have firſt known her by becoming tutor to her ſon †. "He "formed," ſaid Tonſon, "the deſign of getting that "lady from the time when he was firſt taken into "the family." In what part of his life he obtained the recommendation, or how long, and in what manner he lived in the family, I know not. His advances at firſt were certainly timorous, but grew bolder as his reputation and influence increaſed; till at laſt the lady was perſuaded to marry him, on terms much like thoſe on which a Turkiſh princeſs is eſpouſed, to whom the Sultan is reported to pronounce, "Daughter, I give thee this man for thy "ſlave." The marriage, if uncontradicted report can be credited, made no addition to his happineſs; it neither found them nor made them equal. She always remembered her own rank, and thought herſelf entitled to treat with very little ceremony the

* Auguſt 2.

† Spence.

tutor of her ſon. Rowe's ballad of the *Deſpairing Shepherd* is ſaid to have been written, either before or after marriage, upon this memorable pair; and it is certain that Addiſon has left behind him no encouragement for ambitious love.

The year after (1717) he roſe to his higheſt elevation, being made ſecretary of ſtate. For this employment he might be juſtly ſuppoſed qualified by long practice of buſineſs, and by his regular aſcent through other offices; but expectation is often diſappointed; it is univerſally confeſſed that he was unequal to the duties of his place. In the Houſe of Commons he could not ſpeak, and therefore was uſeleſs to the defence of the government. In the office, ſays Pope *, he could not iſſue an order without loſing his time in queſt of fine expreſſions. What he gained in rank he loſt in credit; and, finding by experience his own inability, was forced to ſolicit his diſmiſſion, with a penſion of fifteen hundred pounds a year. His friends palliated this relinquiſhment, of which both friends and enemies knew the true reaſon, with an account of declining health, and the neceſſity of receſs and quiet.

He now returned to his vocation, and began to plan literary occupations for his future life. He purpoſed a tragedy on the death of Socrates; a ſtory of which, as Tickell remarks, the baſis is narrow, and to which I know not how love could have been appended. There would however have been no want either of virtue in the ſentiments, or elegance in the language.

* Spence.

He

He engaged in a nobler work, a defence of the *Chriſtian Religion*, of which part was publiſhed after his death; and he deſigned to have made a new poetical verſion of the Pſalms.

Theſe pious compoſitions Pope imputed* to a ſelfiſh motive, upon the credit, as he owns, of Tonſon; who having quarreled with Addiſon, and not loving him, ſaid, that when he laid down the ſecretary's office, he intended to take orders, and obtain a biſhoprick; "for," ſaid he, "I always thought "him a prieſt in his heart."

That Pope ſhould have thought this conjecture of Tonſon worth remembrance, is a proof, but indeed, ſo far as I have found, the only proof, that he retained ſome malignity from their ancient rivalry. Tonſon pretended but to gueſs it; no other mortal ever ſuſpected it; and Pope might have reflected, that a man, who had been ſecretary of ſtate in the miniſtry of Sunderland, knew a nearer way to a biſhoprick than by defending Religion, or tranſlating the Pſalms.

It is related, that he had once a deſign to make an Engliſh Dictionary, and that he conſidered Dr. Tillotſon as the writer of higheſt authority. There was formerly ſent to me by Mr. Locker, clerk of the Leatherſellers' Company, who was eminent for curioſity and literature, a collection of examples ſelected from Tillotſon's works, as Locker ſaid, by Addiſon. It came too late to be of uſe, ſo I inſpected it but ſlightly, and remember it indiſtinctly. I thought the paſſages too ſhort.

* Spence.

Addiſon, however, did not conclude his life in peaceful ſtudies; but relapſed, when he was near his end, to a political diſpute.

It ſo happened that (1718-19) a controverſy was agitated with great vehemence between thoſe friends of long continuance, Addiſon and Steele. It may be aſked, in the language of Homer, what power or what cauſe ſhould ſet them at variance. The ſubject of their diſpute was of great importance. The earl of Sunderland propoſed an act called *The Peerage Bill*; by which the number of Peers ſhould be fixed, and the king reſtrained from any new creation of nobility, unleſs when an old family ſhould be extinct. To this the lords would naturally agree; and the king, who was yet little acquainted with his own prerogative, and, as is now well-known, almoſt indifferent to the poſſeſſions of the crown, had been perſuaded to conſent. The only difficulty was found among the commons, who were not likely to approve the perpetual excluſion of themſelves and their poſterity. The bill therefore was eagerly oppoſed, and among others by Sir Robert Walpole, whoſe ſpeech was publiſhed.

The lords might think their dignity diminiſhed by improper advancements, and particularly by the introduction of twelve new peers at once, to produce a majority of Tories in the laſt reign; an act of authority violent enough, yet certainly legal, and by no means to be compared with that contempt of national right with which, ſome time afterwards, by the inſtigation of Whiggiſm, the commons, choſen by the people for three years, choſe themſelves for ſeven. But whatever might be the diſpoſition of the

the lords, the people had no wiſh to increaſe their power. The tendency of the bill, as Steele obſerved in a letter to the earl of Oxford, was to introduce an ariſtocracy; for a majority in the houſe of lords, ſo limited, would have been deſpotick and irreſiſtible.

To prevent this ſubverſion of the ancient eſtabliſhment, Steele, whoſe pen readily ſeconded his political paſſions, endeavoured to alarm the nation by a pamphlet called *The Plebeian*. To this an anſwer was publiſhed by Addiſon, under the title of *The Old Whig*, in which it is not diſcovered that Steele was then known to be the advocate for the commons. Steele replied by a ſecond *Plebeian*; and, whether by ignorance or by courteſy, confined himſelf to his queſtion, without any perſonal notice of his opponent. Nothing hitherto was committed againſt the laws of friendſhip, or proprieties of decency; but controvertiſts cannot long retain their kindneſs for each other. The *Old Whig* anſwered the *Plebeian*, and could not forbear ſome contempt of "little *Dicky*, whoſe trade it was to write pam-"phlets." Dicky however did not loſe his ſettled veneration for his friend; but contented himſelf with quoting ſome lines of Cato, which were at once detection and reproof. The bill was laid aſide during that ſeſſion; and Addiſon died before the next, in which its commitment was rejected by two hundred and ſixty-five to one hundred and ſeventy-ſeven.

Every reader ſurely muſt regret that theſe two illuſtrious friends, after ſo many years paſt in confidence and endearment, in unity of Intereſt, confor-

mity of opinion, and fellowſhip of ſtudy, ſhould finally part in acrimonious oppoſition. Such a controverſy was "Bellum pluſquam *civile*," as Lucan expreſſes it. Why could not faction find other advocates? But among the uncertainties of the human ſtate, we are doomed to number the inſtability of friendſhip.

Of this diſpute I have little knowledge but from the *Biographia Britannica*. The *Old Whig* is not inſerted in Addiſon's works; nor is it mentioned by Tickell in his Life; why it was omitted, the biographers doubtleſs give the true reaſon; the fact was too recent, and thoſe who had been heated in the contention were not yet cool.

The neceſſity of complying with times, and of ſparing perſons, is the great impediment of biography. Hiſtory may be formed from permanent monuments and records; but Lives can only be written from perſonal knowledge, which is growing every day leſs, and in a ſhort time is loſt for ever. What is known can ſeldom be immediately told; and when it might be told, it is no longer known. The delicate features of the mind, the nice diſcriminations of character, and the minute peculiarities of conduct, are ſoon obliterated; and it is ſurely better that caprice, obſtinacy, frolick, and folly, however they might delight in the deſcription, ſhould be ſilently forgotten, than that, by wanton merriment and unſeaſonable detection, a pang ſhould be given to a widow, a daughter, a brother, or a friend. As the proceſs of theſe narratives is now bringing me among my contemporaries, I begin to feel myſelf "walking upon aſhes under which the fire is not

"extinguiſhed,"

"extinguiſhed," and coming to the time of which it will be proper rather to ſay "nothing that is falſe, "than all that is true."

The end of this uſeful life was now approaching. —Addiſon had for ſome time been oppreſſed by ſhortneſs of breath, which was now aggravated by a dropſy; and, finding his danger preſſing, he prepared to die conformably to his own precepts and profeſſions.

During this lingering decay, he ſent, as Pope relates *, a meſſage by the earl of Warwick to Mr. Gay, deſiring to ſee him. Gay, who had not viſited him for ſome time before, obeyed the ſummons, and found himſelf received with great kindneſs. The purpoſe for which the interview had been ſolicited was then diſcovered. Addiſon told him, that he had injured him; but that, if he recovered, he would recompenſe him. What the injury was he did not explain; nor did Gay ever know; but ſuppoſed that ſome preferment deſigned for him had, by Addiſon's intervention, been with-held.

Lord Warwick was a young man, of very irregular life, and perhaps of looſe opinions. Addiſon, for whom he did not want reſpect, had very diligently endeavoured to reclaim him; but his arguments and expoſtulations had no effect. One experiment, however, remained to be tried: when he found his life near its end, he directed the young lord to be called; and when he deſired, with great tenderneſs, to hear his laſt injunctions, told him, "I have ſent for you, that you may ſee how a "Chriſtian can die." What effect this awful ſcene

* Spence.

had on the earl, I know not: he likewife died himfelf in a fhort time.

In Tickell's excellent Elegy on his friend are thefe lines:

He taught us how to live; and, oh! too high
The price of knowledge, taught us how to die—

in which he alludes, as he told Dr. Young, to this moving interview.

Having given directions to Mr. Tickell for the publication of his works, and dedicated them on his death-bed to his friend Mr. Craggs, he died June 17, 1719, at Holland-houfe, leaving no child but a daughter.

Of his virtue it is a fufficient teftimony, that the refentment of party has tranfmitted no charge of any crime. He was not one of thofe who are praifed only after death; for his merit was fo generally acknowledged, that Swift, having obferved that his election paffed without a conteft, adds, that, if he propofed himfelf for king, he would hardly have been refufed.

His zeal for his party did not extinguifh his kindnefs for the merit of his opponents: when he was fecretary in Ireland, he refufed to intermit his acquaintance with Swift.

Of his habits, or external manners, nothing is fo often mentioned as that timorous or fullen taciturnity, which his friends called modefty by too mild a name. Steele mentions with great tendernefs "that remarkable bafhfulnefs, which is a cloak that hides and muffles merit;" and tells us, "that his abilities were covered only by modefty, which doubles the beauties which are feen, and gives credit and efteem "to

"to all that are concealed." Chesterfield affirms, that "Addison was the most timorous and aukward "man that he ever saw." And Addison, speaking of his own deficience in conversation, used to say of himself, that, with respect to intellectual wealth, "he could draw bills for a thousand pounds, though "he had not a guinea in his pocket."

That he wanted current coin for ready payment, and by that want was often obstructed and distressed; that he was often oppressed by an improper and ungraceful timidity; every testimony concurs to prove: but Chesterfield's representation is doubtless hyperbolical. That man cannot be supposed very unexpert in the arts of conversation and practice of life, who, without fortune or alliance, by his usefulness and dexterity, became secretary of state; and who died at forty-seven, after having not only stood long in the highest rank of wit and literature, but filled one of the most important offices of state.

The time in which he lived had reason to lament his obstinacy of silence; "for he was," says Steele, "above all men in that talent called humour, and "enjoyed it in such perfection, that I have often re-"flected, after a night spent with him apart from "all the world, that I had had the pleasure of con-"versing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence "and Catullus, who had all their wit and nature, "heightened with humour more exquisite and de-"lightful than any other man ever possessed." This is the fondness of a friend; let us hear what is told us by a rival: "Addison's conversation *," says Pope, "had something in it more charming than I

* Spence.

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"have

"have found in any other man. But this was only "when familiar: before ſtrangers, or, perhaps, a "ſingle ſtranger, he preſerved his dignity by a ſtiff "ſilence."

This modeſty was by no means inconſiſtent with a very high opinion of his own merit. He demanded to be the firſt name in modern wit; and, with Steele to echo him, uſed to depreciate Dryden, whom Pope and Congreve defended againſt them*. There is no reaſon to doubt that he ſuffered too much pain from the prevalence of Pope's poetical reputation; nor is it without ſtrong reaſon ſuſpected, that by ſome diſingenuous acts he endeavoured to obſtruct it; Pope was not the only man whom he inſidiouſly injured, though the only man of whom he could be afraid.

His own powers were ſuch as might have ſatisfied him with conſcious excellence. Of very extenſive learning he has indeed given no proofs. He ſeems to have had ſmall acquaintance with the ſciences, and to have read little except Latin and French; but of the Latin poets his *Dialogues on Medals* ſhew that he had peruſed the works with great diligence and ſkill. The abundance of his own mind left him little indeed of adventitious ſentiments; his wit always could ſuggeſt what the occaſion demanded. He had read with critical eyes the important volume of human life, and knew the heart of man from the depths of ſtratagem to the ſurface of affectation.

What he knew he could eaſily communicate. "This," ſays Steele, "was particular in this writer,

* Tonſon and Spence.

"that,

"that, when he had taken his resolution, or made "his plan for what he designed to write, he would "walk about a room, and dictate it into language "with as much freedom and ease as any one could "write it down, and attend to the coherence and "grammar of what he dictated."

Pope *, who can be less suspected of favouring his memory, declares that he wrote very fluently, but was slow and scrupulous in correcting; that many of his Spectators were written very fast, and sent immediately to the press; and that it seemed to be for his advantage not to have time for much revisal.

"He would alter," says Pope, "any thing to "please his friends, before publication; but would "not retouch his pieces afterwards; and I believe "not one word of Cato, to which I made an objec- "tion, was suffered to stand."

The last line of Cato is Pope's, having been originally written

And oh! 'twas this that ended Cato's life.

Pope might have made more objections to the six concluding lines. In the first couplet the words "from hence" are improper; and the second line is taken from Dryden's Virgil. Of the next couplet, the first verse, being included in the second, is therefore useless; and in the third *Discord* is made to produce *Strife*.

Of the course of Addison's familiar day *, before his marriage, Pope has given a detail. He had in

* Spence.

the houfe with him Budgell, and perhaps Philips. His chief companions were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Carey, Davenant and colonel Brett. With one or other of thefe he always breakfafted. He ftudied all morning; then dined at a tavern; and went afterwards to Button's.

Button had been a fervant in the countefs of Warwick's family, who, under the patronage of Addifon, kept a coffee-houfe on the fouth fide of Ruffel-ftreet, about two doors from Covent-garden. Here it was that the wits of that time ufed to affemble. It is faid, when Addifon had fuffered any vexation from the countefs, he withdrew the company from Button's houfe.

From the coffee-houfe he went again to a tavern, where he often fat late, and drank too much wine. In the bottle, difcontent feeks for comfort, cowardice for courage, and bafhfulnefs for confidence. It is not unlikely that Addifon was firft feduced to excefs by the manumiffion which he obtained from the fervile timidity of his fober hours. He that feels oppreffion from the prefence of thofe to whom he knows himfelf fuperior, will defire to fet loofe his powers of converfation; and who, that ever afked fuccours from Bacchus, was able to preferve himfelf from being enflaved by his auxiliary?

Among thofe friends it was that Addifon difplayed the elegance of his colloquial accomplifhments, which may eafily be fuppofed fuch as Pope reprefents them. The remark of Mandeville, who, when he had paffed an evening in his company, declared that he was a parfon in a tye-wig, can detract little from his character; he was always referved to

ftrangers,

ſtrangers, and was not incited to uncommon freedom by a character like that of Mandeville.

From any minute knowledge of his familiar manners, the intervention of ſixty years has now debarred us. Steele once promiſed Congreve and the publick a complete deſcription of his character; but the promiſes of authors are like the vows of lovers. Steele thought no more on his deſign, or thought on it with anxiety that at laſt diſguſted him, and left his friend in the hands of Tickell.

One ſlight lineament of his character Swift has preſerved. It was his practice, when he found any man invincibly wrong, to flatter his opinions by acquieſcence, and ſink him yet deeper in abſurdity. This artifice of miſchief was admired by Stella; and Swift ſeems to approve her admiration.

His works will ſupply ſome information. It appears, from the various pictures of the world, that, with all his baſhfulneſs, he had converſed with many diſtinct claſſes of men, had ſurveyed their ways with very diligent obſervation, and marked with great acuteneſs the effects of different modes of life. He was a man in whoſe preſence nothing reprehenſible was out of danger; quick in diſcerning whatever was wrong or ridiculous, and not unwilling to expoſe it. "There are," ſays Steele, "in his writings "many oblique ſtrokes upon ſome of the wittieſt "men of the age." His delight was more to excite merriment than deteſtation; and he detects follies rather than crimes.

If any judgement be made, from his books, of his moral character, nothing will be found but purity and excellence. Knowledge of mankind indeed, leſs

leſs extenſive than that of Addiſon, will ſhew, that to write, and to live, are very different. Many who praiſe virtue, do no more than praiſe it. Yet it is reaſonable to believe that Addiſon's profeſſions and practice were at no great variance, ſince amidſt that ſtorm of faction in which moſt of his life was paſſed, though his ſtation made him conſpicuous, and his activity made him formidable, the character given him by his friends was never contradicted by his enemies: of thoſe, with whom intereſt or opinion united him, he had not only the eſteem, but the kindneſs; and of others, whom the violence of oppoſition drove againſt him, though he might loſe the love, he retained the reverence.

It is juſtly obſerved by Tickell, that he employed wit on the ſide of virtue and religion. He not only made the proper uſe of wit himſelf, but taught it to others; and from his time it has been generally ſubſervient to the cauſe of reaſon and of truth. He has diſſipated the prejudice that had long connected gaiety with vice, and eaſineſs of manners with laxity of principles. He has reſtored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be aſhamed. This is an elevation of literary character, "above all Greek, "above all Roman fame." No greater felicity can genius attain than that of having purified intellectual pleaſure, ſeparated mirth from indecency, and wit from licentiouſneſs; of having taught a ſucceſſion of writers to bring elegance and gaiety to the aid of goodneſs; and, if I may uſe expreſſions yet more awful, of having "turned many to righteouſneſs."

Addiſon, in his life, and for ſome time afterwards, was conſidered by a greater part of readers

as ſupremely excelling both in poetry and criticiſm. Part of his reputation may be probably aſcribed to the advancement of his fortune; when, as Swift obſerves, he became a ſtateſman, and ſaw poets waiting at his levee, it was no wonder that praiſe was accumulated upon him. Much likewiſe may be more honourably aſcribed to his perſonal character: he who, if he had claimed it, might have obtained the diadem, was not likely to be denied the laurel.

But time quickly puts an end to artificial and accidental fame; and Addiſon is to paſs through futurity protected only by his genius. Every name which kindneſs or intereſt once raiſed too high is in danger, leſt the next age ſhould, by the vengeance of criticiſm, ſink it in the ſame proportion. A great writer has lately ſtyled him "an indifferent poet, "and a worſe critick."

His poetry is firſt to be conſidered; of which it muſt be confeſſed that it has not often thoſe felicities of diction which give luſtre to ſentiments, or that vigour of ſentiment that animates diction: there is little of ardour, vehemence, or tranſport; there is very rarely the awfulneſs of grandeur, and not very often the ſplendour of elegance. He thinks juſtly; but he thinks faintly. This is his general character; to which, doubtleſs, many ſingle paſſages will furniſh exception.

Yet, if he ſeldom reaches ſupreme excellence, he rarely ſinks into dulneſs, and is ſtill more rarely entangled in abſurdity. He did not truſt his powers enough to be negligent. There is in moſt of his compoſitions a calmneſs and equability, deliberate

and cautious, ſometimes with little that delights, but ſeldom with any thing that offends.

Of this kind ſeem to be his poems to Dryden, to Sommers, and to the King. His ode on St. Cecilia has been imitated by Pope, and has ſomething in it of Dryden's vigour. Of his Account of the Engliſh Poets, he uſed to ſpeak as a "poor thing*;" but it is not worſe than his uſual ſtrain. He has ſaid, not very judiciouſly, in his character of Waller,

Thy verſe could ſhew ev'n Cromwell's innocence;
And compliment the ſtorms that bore him hence.
O! had thy Muſe not come an age too ſoon,
But ſeen great Naſſau on the Britiſh throne,
How had his triumph glitter'd in thy page!

What is this but to ſay, that he who could compliment Cromwell had been the proper poet for king William? Addiſon, however, printed the piece.

The Letter from Italy has been always praiſed, but has never been praiſed beyond its merit. It is more correct, with leſs appearance of labour, and more elegant, with leſs ambition of ornament, than any other of his poems. There is, however, one broken metaphor, of which notice may properly be taken:

Fir'd with that name—
I bridle in my ſtruggling Muſe with pain,
That longs to launch into a nobler ſtrain.

To *bridle a goddeſs* is no very delicate idea; but why muſt ſhe be *bridled?* becauſe ſhe *longs to launch*; an act which was never hindered by a *bridle:* and whither will ſhe *launch?* into a *nobler ſtrain*. She is

* Spence.

in

in the firſt line a *horſe*, in the ſecond a *boat*; and the care of the poet is to keep his *horſe* or his *boat* from *ſinging*.

The next compoſition is the far-famed campaign, which Dr. Warton has termed a "Gazette in "Rhyme," with harſhneſs not often uſed by the good-nature of his criticiſm. Before a cenſure ſo ſevere is admitted, let us conſider that War is a frequent ſubject of Poetry, and then enquire who has deſcribed it with more juſtneſs and force. Many of our own writers tried their powers upon this year of victory: yet Addiſon's is confeſſedly the beſt performance; his poem is the work of a man not blinded by the duſt of learning; his images are not borrowed merely from books. The ſuperiority which he confers upon his hero is not perſonal proweſs, and "mighty bone," but deliberate intrepidity, a calm command of his paſſions, and the power of conſulting his own mind in the midſt of danger. The rejection and contempt of fiction is rational and manly.

It may be obſerved that the laſt line is imitated by Pope:

> Marlb'rough's exploits appear divinely bright—
> Rais'd of themſelves their genuine charms they boaſt,
> And thoſe that paint them trueſt, praiſe them moſt.

This Pope had in his thoughts; but, not knowing how to uſe what was not his own, he ſpoiled the thought when he had borrowed it:

> The well-ſung woes ſhall ſoothe my penſive ghoſt;
> He beſt can paint them who ſhall feel them moſt.

Martial exploits may be *painted*; perhaps *woes* may be *painted*; but they are ſurely not *painted* by being

well-sung: it is not eaſy to paint in ſong, or to ſing in colours.

No paſſage in the Campaign has been more often mentioned than the ſimile of the angel, which is ſaid in the Tatler to be "one of the nobleſt "thoughts that ever entered into the heart of man," and is therefore worthy of attentive conſideration. Let it be firſt enquired whether it be a ſimile. A poetical ſimile is the diſcovery of likeneſs between two actions, in their general nature diſſimilar, or of cauſes terminating by different operations in ſome reſemblance of effect. But the mention of another like conſequence from a like cauſe, or of a like performance by a like agency, is not a ſimile, but an exemplification. It is not a ſimile to ſay that the Thames waters fields, as the Po waters fields; or that as Hecla vomits flames in Iceland, ſo Ætna vomits flames in Sicily. When Horace ſays of Pindar, that he pours his violence and rapidity of verſe, as a river ſwoln with rain ruſhes from the mountain; or of himſelf, that his genius wanders in queſt of poetical decorations, as the bee wanders to collect honey; he, in either caſe, produces a ſimile; the mind is impreſſed with the reſemblance of things generally unlike, as unlike as intellect and body. But if Pindar had been deſcribed as writing with the copiouſneſs and grandeur of Homer, or Horace had told that he reviewed and finiſhed his own poetry with the ſame care as Iſocrates poliſhed his orations, inſtead of ſimilitude, he would have exhibited almoſt identity; he would have given the ſame portraits with different names. In the poem now examined, when

when the English are represented as gaining a fortified pass, by repetition of attack, and perseverance of resolution; their obstinacy of courage and vigour of onset is well illustrated by the sea that breaks, with incessant battery, the dikes of Holland. This is a simile: but when Addison, having celebrated the beauty of Marlborough's person, tells us, that "Achilles thus was formed with every grace," here is no simile, but a mere exemplification. A simile may be compared to lines converging at a point, and is more excellent as the lines approach from greater distance: an exemplification may be considered as two parallel lines, which run on together without approximation, never far separated, and never joined.

Marlborough is so like the angel in the poem, that the action of both is almost the same, and performed by both in the same manner. Marlborough "teaches the battle to rage;" the angel "directs "the storm:" Marlborough is "unmoved in peace-"ful thought;" the angel is "calm and serene;" Marlborough stands "unmoved amidst the shock "of hosts;" the angel rides "calm in the whirl-"wind." The lines on Marlborough are just and noble; but the simile gives almost the same images a second time.

But perhaps this thought, though hardly a simile, was remote from vulgar conceptions, and required great labour and research, or dexterity of application. Of this Dr. Madden, a name which Ireland ought to honour, once gave me his opinion. "If I had "set," said he, "ten school-boys to write on the

" battle of Blenheim, and eight had brought me the " angel, I ſhould not have been ſurpriſed."

The opera of Roſamond, though it is ſeldom mentioned, is one of the firſt of Addiſon's compoſitions. The ſubject is well choſen, the fiction is pleaſing, and the praiſe of Marlborough, for which the ſcene gives an opportunity, is, what perhaps every human excellence muſt be, the product of good-luck, improved by genius. The thoughts are ſometimes great, and ſometimes tender; the verſification is eaſy and gay. There is doubtleſs ſome advantage in the ſhortneſs of the lines, which there is little temptation to load with expletive epithets. The dialogue ſeems commonly better than the ſongs. The two comick characters of Sir Truſty and Grideline, though of no great value, are yet ſuch as the poet intended. Sir Truſty's account of the death of Roſamond is, I think, too groſſly abſurd. The whole drama is airy and elegant; engaging in its proceſs, and pleaſing in its concluſion. If Addiſon had cultivated the lighter parts of poetry, he would probably have excelled.

The tragedy of Cato, which, contrary to the rule obſerved in ſelecting the works of other poets, has by the weight of its character forced its way into the late collection, is unqueſtionably the nobleſt production of Addiſon's genius. Of a work ſo much read, it is difficult to ſay any thing new. About things on which the publick thinks long, it commonly attains to think right; and of Cato it has been not unjuſtly determined, that it is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama, rather a ſucceſſion

of juſt ſentiments in elegant language, than a repreſentation of natural affections, or of any ſtate probable or poſſible in human life. Nothing here "excites or aſſuages emotion:" here is "no magical "power of raiſing phantaſtick terror or wild "anxiety." The events are expected without ſolicitude, and are remembered without joy or ſorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we conſider not what they are doing, or what they are ſuffering; we wiſh only to know what they have to ſay. Cato is a being above our ſolicitude; a man of whom the gods take care, and whom we leave to their care with heedleſs confidence. To the reſt neither gods nor men can have much attention; for there is not one amongſt them that ſtrongly attracts either affection or eſteem. But they are made the vehicles of ſuch ſentiments and ſuch expreſſion, that there is ſcarcely a ſcene in the play which the reader does not wiſh to impreſs upon his memory.

When Cato was ſhewn to Pope *, he adviſed the author to print it, without any theatrical exhibition; ſuppoſing that it would be read more favourably than heard. Addiſon declared himſelf of the ſame opinion; but urged the importunity of his friends for its appearance on the ſtage. The emulation of parties made it ſucceſsful beyond expectation; and its ſucceſs has introduced or confirmed among us the uſe of dialogue too declamatory, of unaffecting elegance, and chill philoſophy.

The univerſality of applauſe, however it might quell the cenſure of common mortals, had no other

* Spence.

effect than to harden Dennis in fixed dislike; but his dislike was not merely capricious. He found and shewed many faults; he shewed them indeed with anger, but he found them indeed with acuteness, such as ought to rescue his criticism from oblivion; though, at last, it will have no other life than it derives from the work which it endeavours to oppress.

Why he pays no regard to the opinion of the audience, he gives his reason, by remarking, that,

"A deference is to be paid to a general applause, "when it appears that the applause is natural and "spontaneous; but that little regard is to be had to "it, when it is affected or artificial. Of all the "tragedies which in his memory have had vast and "violent runs, not one has been excellent, few have "been tolerable, most have been scandalous. When "a poet writes a tragedy, who knows he has judge-"ment, and who feels he has genius, that poet pre-"sumes upon his own merit, and scorns to make a "cabal. That people come coolly to the represen-"tation of such a tragedy, without any violent ex-"pectation, or delusive imagination, or invincible "prepossession; that such an audience is liable to "receive the impressions which the poem shall natu-"rally make on them, and to judge by their own "reason, and their own judgements, and that reason "and judgement are calm and serene, not formed "by nature to make proselytes, and to controul and "lord it over the imaginations of others. But that "when an author writes a tragedy, who knows he "has neither genius or judgement, he has recourse "to the making a party, and he endeavours to make

" up in induſtry what is wanting in talent, and to " ſupply by poetical craft the abſence of poetical " art: that ſuch an author is humbly contented to " raiſe men's paſſions by a plot without doors, ſince " he deſpairs of doing it by that which he brings " upon the ſtage. That party and paſſion, and pre- " poſſeſſion, are clamorous and tumultuous things, " and ſo much the more clamorous and tumultuous " by how much the more erroneous: that they do- " mineer and tyrannize over the imaginations of " perſons who want judgement, and ſometimes too " of thoſe who have it; and, like a fierce and out- " rageous torrent, bear down all oppoſition before " them."

He then condemns the neglect of poetical juſtice; which is one of his favourite principles.

" 'Tis certainly the duty of every tragick poet, by " the exact diſtribution of poetical juſtice, to imi- " tate the Divine Diſpenſation, and to inculcate a " particular Providence. 'Tis true, indeed, upon " the ſtage of the world, the wicked ſometimes " proſper, and the guiltleſs ſuffer. But that is per- " mitted by the Governor of the world, to ſhew, " from the attribute of his infinite juſtice, that there " is a compenſation in futurity, to prove the im- " mortality of the human ſoul, and the certainty of " future rewards and puniſhments. But the poeti- " cal perſons in tragedy exiſt no longer than the " reading, or the repreſentation; the whole extent " of their enmity is circumſcribed by thoſe; and " therefore, during that reading or repreſentation, " according to their merits or demerits, they muſt " be puniſhed or rewarded. If this is not done,

" there

"there is no impartial diſtribution of poetical juſ-
"tice, no inſtructive lecture of a particular Provi-
"dence, and no imitation of the Divine Diſpenſa-
"tion. And yet the author of this tragedy does
"not only run counter to this, in the fate of his
"principal character; but every where, throughout
"it, makes virtue ſuffer, and vice triumph: for not
"only Cato is vanquiſhed by Cæſar, but the
"treachery and perfidiouſneſs of Syphax prevail
"over the honeſt ſimplicity and the credulity of
"Juba; and the ſly ſubtlety and diſſimulation of
"Portius over the generous frankneſs and open-
"heartedneſs of Marcus."

Whatever pleaſure there may be in ſeeing crimes puniſhed and virtue rewarded, yet, ſince wickedneſs often proſpers in real life, the poet is certainly at liberty to give it proſperity on the ſtage. For if poetry has an imitation of reality, how are its laws broken by exhibiting the world in its true form? The ſtage may ſometimes gratify our wiſhes; but, if it be truly the "*mirror of life*," it ought to ſhew us ſometimes what we are to expect.

Dennis objects to the characters, that they are not natural, or reaſonable; but as heroes and heroines are not beings that are ſeen every day, it is hard to find upon what principles their conduct ſhall be tried. It is, however, not uſeleſs to conſider what he ſays of the manner in which Cato receives the account of his ſon's death.

"Nor is the grief of Cato, in the fourth act,
"one jot more in nature than that of his ſon and
"Lucia in the third. Cato receives the news of
"his ſon's death not only with dry eyes, but with a
"ſort

"sort of satisfaction; and in the same page sheds "tears for the calamity of his country, and does "the same thing in the next page upon the bare "apprehension of the danger of his friends. Now, "since the love of one's country is the love of one's "countrymen, as I have shewn upon another occa-"sion, I desire to ask these questions: Of all our "countrymen, which do we love most, those whom "we know, or those whom we know not? And "of those whom we know, which do we cherish "most, our friends or our enemies? And of our "friends, which are the dearest to us, those who are "related to us, or those who are not? And of all "our relations, for which have we most tenderness, "for those who are near to us, or for those who are "remote? And of our near relations, which are "the nearest, and consequently the dearest to us, "our offspring, or others? Our offspring most "certainly; as Nature, or, in other words, Provi-"dence, has wisely contrived for the preservation of "mankind. Now, does it not follow, from what "has been said, that for a man to receive the news "of his son's death with dry eyes, and to weep at "the same time for the calamities of his country, is "a wretched affectation, and a miserable incon-"sistency? Is not that, in plain English, to receive "with dry eyes the news of the deaths of those for "whose sake our country is a name so dear to us, "and at the same time to shed tears for those for "whose sakes our country is not a name so dear to "us?"

But this formidable assailant is less resistible when he attacks the probability of the action, and the rea-

reaſonableneſs of the plan. Every critical reader muſt remark, that Addiſon has, with a ſcrupuloſity almoſt unexampled on the Engliſh ſtage, confined himſelf in time to a ſingle day, and in place to rigorous unity. The ſcene never changes, and the whole action of the play paſſes in the great hall of Cato's houſe at Utica. Much therefore is done in the hall, for which any other place had been more fit; and this impropriety affords Dennis many hints of merriment, and opportunities of triumph. The paſſage is long; but as ſuch diſquiſitions are not common, and the objections are ſkilfully formed and vigorouſly urged, thoſe who delight in critical controverſy will not think it tedious.

"Upon the departure of Portius, Sempronius "makes but one ſoliloquy, and immediately in "comes Syphax, and then the two politicians are "at it immediately. They lay their heads together, "with their ſnuff-boxes in their hands, as Mr. Bayes "has it, and feague it away. But, in the midſt of "that wiſe ſcene, Syphax ſeems to give a ſeaſonable "caution to Sempronius:

> "*Syph.* But is it true, Sempronius, that your ſenate
> "Is call'd together! Gods! thou muſt be cautious;
> "Cato has piercing eyes."

"There is a great deal of caution ſhewn indeed, "in meeting in a governor's own hall to carry on "their plot againſt him. Whatever opinion they "have of his eyes, I ſuppoſe they have none of his "ears, or they would never have talked at this "fooliſh rate ſo near:

> "Gods! thou muſt be cautious."

"Oh!

"Oh! yes, very cautious: for if Cato ſhould over- "hear you, and turn you off for politicians, Cæſar "would never take you.

"When Cato, Act II. turns the ſenators out of "the hall, upon pretence of acquainting Juba with "the reſult of their debates, he appears to me to "do a thing which is neither reaſonable or civil. "Juba might certainly have better been made ac- "quainted with the reſult of that debate in ſome "private apartment of the palace. But the poet was "driven upon this abſurdity to make way for another; "and that is, to give Juba an opportunity to demand "Marcia of her father. But the quarrel and rage "of Juba and Syphax, in the ſame act; the invec- "tives of Syphax againſt the Romans and Cato; the "advice that he gives Juba, in her father's hall, to "bear away Marcia by force; and his brutal and "clamorous rage upon his refuſal, and at a time "when Cato was ſcarcely out of ſight, and perhaps "not out of hearing, at leaſt ſome of his guards or "domeſticks muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed to be "within hearing; is a thing that is ſo far from being "probable, that it is hardly poſſible.

"Sempronius, in the ſecond Act, comes back "once more in the ſame morning to the governor's "hall, to carry on the conſpiracy with Syphax "againſt the governor, his country, and his family; "which is ſo ſtupid, that it is below the wiſdom of "the O—'s, the Mac's, and the Teague's; even "Euſtace Commins himſelf would never have gone "to Juſtice-hall, to have conſpired againſt the go- "vernment. If officers at Portſmouth ſhould lay

"their

" their heads together, in order to the carrying off* " J— G—'s niece or daughter, would they meet in " J— G—'s hall, to carry on that conſpiracy? " There would be no neceſſity for their meeting " there, at leaſt till they came to the execution of " their plot, becauſe there would be other places to " meet in. There would be no probability that " they ſhould meet there, becauſe there would be " places more private and more commodious.' Now " there ought to be nothing in a tragical action but " what is neceſſary or probable.

" But treaſon is not the only thing that is carried " on in this hall, that, and love, and philoſophy, " take their turns in it, without any manner of ne- " ceſſity or probability occaſioned by the action, as " duly and as regularly, without interrupting one " another, as if there were a triple league between " them, and a mutual agreement that each ſhould " give place to, and make way for, the other, in a " due and orderly ſucceſſion.

" We now come to the third Act. Sempronius, " in this Act, comes into the governor's hall, with " the leaders of the mutiny: but, as ſoon as Cato " is gone, Sempronius, who but juſt before had " acted like an unparalleled knave, diſcovers him- " ſelf, like an egregious fool, to be an accomplice " in the conſpiracy.

* The perſon meant by the initials J. G. is Sir John Gibſon, Lieutenant Governor of Portſmouth in the year 1710, and afterwards. He was much beloved in the army, and by the common ſoldiers called *Johnny Gibſon*. H.

" *Semp.*

" *Semp.* Know, villains, when ſuch paltry ſlaves pre-
" ſume
" To mix in treaſon, if the plot ſucceeds,
" They 're thrown neglected by; but, if it fails,
" They 're ſure to die like dogs, as you ſhall do.
" Here, take theſe factious monſters, drag them forth
" To ſudden death—

" 'Tis true, indeed, the ſecond leader ſays, there " are none there but friends; but is that poſſible at " ſuch a juncture? Can a parcel of rogues attempt " to aſſaſſinate the governor of a town of war, in " his own houſe, in mid-day? and, after they are " diſcovered, and defeated, can there be none near " them but friends? Is it not plain, from theſe " words of Sempronius,

" Here, take theſe factious monſters, drag them forth
" To ſudden death—

" and from the entrance of the guards upon the " word of command, that thoſe guards were within " ear-ſhot? Behold Sempronius then palpably diſ- " covered. How comes it to paſs, then, that inſtead " of being hanged up with the reſt, he remains ſecure " in the governor's hall, and there carries on his " conſpiracy againſt the government, the third time " in the ſame day, with his old comrade Syphax, " who enters at the ſame time that the guards are " carrying away the leaders, big with the news of " the defeat of Sempronius; though where he had " his intelligence ſo ſoon is difficult to imagine? " And now the reader may expect a very extraordi- " nary ſcene; there is not abundance of ſpirit in- " deed, nor a great deal of paſſion, but there is " wiſdom more than enough to ſupply all defects.

" *Syph.*

" *Syph.* Our firſt deſign, my friend, has prov'd abor-
" tive;
" Still there remains an after-game to play:
" My troops are mounted, their Numidian ſteeds
" Snuff up the winds, and long to ſcour the deſart.
" Let but Sempronius lead us in our flight,
" We'll force the gate, where Marcus keeps his guard,
" And hew down all that would oppoſe our paſſage;
" A day will bring us into Cæſar's camp.

" *Semp.* Confuſion! I have fail'd of half my purpoſe;
" Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind.

" Well! but though he tells us the half purpoſe he " has fail'd of, he does not tell us the half that he " has carried. But what does he mean by

" Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind?

" He is now in her own houſe! and we have neither " ſeen her, nor heard of her, any where elſe ſince the " play began. But now let us hear Syphax:

" What hinders then, but that you find her out,
" And hurry her away by manly force?

" But what does old Syphax mean by finding her " out? They talk as if ſhe were as hard to be found " as a hare in a froſty morning.

" *Semp.* But how to gain admiſſion!

" Oh! ſhe is found out then, it ſeems.

" But how to gain admiſſion! for acceſs
" Is giv'n to none, but Juba and her brothers.

" But, raillery apart, why acceſs to Juba? For he " was owned and received as a lover neither by the " father nor by the daughter. Well! but let that

" paſs. Syphax puts Sempronius out of pain imme-
" diately; and, being a Numidian, abounding in
" wiles, ſupplies him with a ſtratagem for admiſſion,
" that, I believe, is a non-pareille.

" *Syph.* Thou ſhalt have Juba's dreſs, and Juba's
" guards;
" The doors will open when Numidia's prince
" Seems to appear before them.

" Sempronius is, it ſeems, to paſs for Juba in full
" day at Cato's houſe, where they were both ſo very
" well known, by having Juba's dreſs and his guards;
" as if one of the Marſhals of France could paſs for
" the duke of Bavaria at noon-day, at Verſailles, by
" having his dreſs and liveries. But how does Sy-
" phax pretend to help Sempronius to young Juba's
" dreſs? Does he ſerve him in a double capacity,
" as general and maſter of his wardrobe? But why
" Juba's guards? For the devil of any guards has
" Juba appeared with yet. Well! though this is a
" mighty politick invention, yet, methinks, they
" might have done without it: for, ſince the advice
" that Syphax gave to Sempronius was,

" To hurry her away by manly force,

" in my opinion, the ſhorteſt and likelieſt way of
" coming at the lady was by demoliſhing, inſtead of
" putting on an impertinent diſguiſe to circumvent
" two or three ſlaves. But Sempronius, it ſeems,
" is of another opinion. He extols to the ſkies the
" invention of old Syphax:

" *Semp.* Heavens! what a thought was there!

"Now, I appeal to the reader, if I have not been "as good as my word. Did I not tell him, that I "would lay before him a very wiſe ſcene?

"But now let us lay before the reader that part "of the ſcenery of the Fourth Act, which may "ſhew the abſurdities which the author has run into, "through the indiſcreet obſervance of the Unity "of Place. I do not remember that Ariſtotle has "ſaid any thing expreſſly concerning the Unity of "Place. 'Tis true, implicitly he has ſaid enough in "the rules which he has laid down for the Chorus. "For, by making the Chorus an eſſential part of "Tragedy, and by bringing it on the ſtage immedi- "ately after the opening of the ſcene, and retaining "it there till the very cataſtrophe, he has ſo deter- "mined and fixed the place of action, that it was "impoſſible for an author on the Grecian ſtage to "break through that unity. I am of opinion, that "if a modern tragick poet can preſerve the unity of "place, without deſtroying the probability of the "incidents, 'tis always beſt for him to do it; becauſe, "by the preſervation of that unity, as we have taken "notice above, he adds grace, and clearneſs, and "comelineſs, to the repreſentation. But ſince there "are no expreſs rules about it, and we are under no "compulſion to keep it, ſince we have no chorus "as the Grecian poet had; if it cannot be pre- "ſerved, without rendering the greater part of the "incidents unreaſonable and abſurd, and perhaps "ſometimes monſtrous, 'tis certainly better to "break it.

"Now comes bully Sempronius, comically ac- "coutred and equipped with his Numidian dreſs

"and

[library stamp]

"and his Numidian guards. Let the reader attend "to him with all his ears; for the words of the wise "are precious:

" *Semp.* The deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her
" covert.

"Now I would fain know why this deer is said "to be lodged, since we have not heard one word, "since the play began, of her being at all out of "harbour: and if we consider the discourse with "which she and Lucia begin the Act, we have rea-"son to believe that they had hardly been talking "of such matters in the street. However, to plea-"sure Sempronius, let us suppose, for once, that "the deer is lodged.

" The deer is lodg'd, I've track'd her to her covert.

"If he had seen her in the open field, what occa-"sion had he to track her, when he had so many "Numidian dogs at his heels, which, with one hal-"loo, he might have set upon her haunches? If "he did not see her in the open field, how could he "possibly track her? If he had seen her in the "street, why did he not set upon her in the street, "since through the street she must be carried at last? "Now here, instead of having his thoughts upon "his business, and upon the present danger; instead "of meditating and contriving how he shall pass "with his mistress through the southern gate, where "her brother Marcus is upon the guard, and where "he would certainly prove an impediment to him, "which is the Roman word for the *baggage*; instead of

" doing this, Sempronius is entertaining himſelf with " whimſies:

" *Sempr.* How will the young Numidian rave to ſee
" His miſtreſs loſt! If aught could glad my ſoul,
" Beyond th' enjoyment of ſo bright a prize,
" 'Twould be to torture that young, gay Barbarian.
" But hark! what noiſe? Death to my hopes! 'tis he,
" 'Tis Juba's ſelf! There is but one way left!
" He muſt be murder'd, and a paſſage cut
" Through thoſe his guards.

" Pray, what are 'thoſe guards?' I thought " at preſent, that Juba's guards had been Semproni- " us's tools, and had been dangling after his heels.

" But now let us ſum up all theſe abſurdities to- " gether. Sempronius goes at noon-day, in Juba's " cloaths, and with Juba's guards, to Cato's palace, " in order to paſs for Juba, in a place where they " were both ſo very well known: he meets Juba " there, and reſolves to murder him with his own " guards. Upon the guards appearing a little " baſhful, he threatens them:

" Hah! Daſtards, do you tremble!
" Or act like men; or, by yon azure heav'n!

" But the guards ſtill remaining reſtive, Sempro- " nius himſelf attacks Juba, while each of the " guards is repreſenting Mr. Spectator's ſign of the " Gaper, awed, it ſeems, and terrified by Sempro- " nius's threats. Juba kills Sempronius, and takes " his own army priſoners, and carries them in tri- " umph away to Cato. Now, I would fain know, " if

" if any part of Mr. Bayes's tragedy is ſo full of ab-
" ſurdity as this?

" Upon hearing the claſh of ſwords, Lucia and " Marcia come in. The queſtion is, why no men " come in upon hearing the noiſe of ſwords in the " governor's hall? Where was the governor him- " ſelf? Where were his guards? Where were his " ſervants? Such an attempt as this, ſo near the " governor of a place of war, was enough to alarm " the whole garriſon: and yet, for almoſt half an " hour after Sempronius was killed, we find none of " thoſe appear, who were the likelieſt in the world " to be alarmed; and the noiſe of ſwords is made to " draw only two poor women thither, who were moſt " certain to run away from it. Upon Lucia and " Marcia's coming in, Lucia appears in all the " ſymptoms of an hyſterical gentlewoman:

" *Luc.* Sure 'twas the claſh of ſwords! my troubled
" heart
" Is ſo caſt down, and ſunk amidſt its ſorrows,
" It throbs with fear, and aches at every ſound!

" And immediately her old whimſy returns upon " her:

" O, Marcia, ſhould thy brothers, for my ſake—
" I die away with horror at the thought.

" She fancies that there can be no cutting-of-throats, " but it muſt be for her. If this is a tragical, I would " fain know what is comical. Well! upon this they " ſpy the body of Sempronius; and Marcia, deluded " by the habit, it ſeems, takes him for Juba; for, " ſays ſhe,

" The face is muffled up within the garment.

"Now, how a man could fight, and fall with his "face muffled up in his garment, is, I think, a little "hard to conceive! Besides, Juba, before he killed "him, knew him to be Sempronius. It was not by "his garment that he knew this; it was by his face "then: his face therefore was not muffled. Upon "seeing this man with his muffled face, Marcia falls "a raving; and, owning her passion for the sup-"posed defunct, begins to make his funeral oration. "Upon which Juba enters listening, I suppose on "tip-toe; for I cannot imagine how any one can en-"ter listening in any other posture. I would fain "know how it came to pass, that during all this "time he had sent nobody, no, not so much as a "candle-snuffer, to take away the dead body of Sem-"pronius. Well! but let us regard him listening. "Having left his apprehension behind him, he, at "first, applies what Marcia says to Sempronius. But "finding at last, with much ado, that he himself is "the happy man, he quits his eve-dropping, and "discovers himself just time enough to prevent his "being cuckolded by a dead man, of whom the mo-"ment before he had appeared so jealous; and gree-"dily intercepts the bliss which was fondly designed "for one who could not be the better for it. But "here I must ask a question: how comes Juba to "listen here, who had not listened before through-"out the play? Or how comes he to be the only "person of this tragedy who listens, when love and "treason were so often talked in so publick a place "as a hall? I am afraid the author was driven "upon all these absurdities only to introduce this "miserable mistake of Marcia, which, after all, is

"much

" much below the dignity of tragedy, as any thing is
" which is the effect or result of trick.

" But let us come to the scenery of the Fifth Act. " Cato appears first upon the scene, sitting in a " thoughtful posture; in his hand Plato's treatise on " the Immortality of the Soul, a drawn sword on the " table by him. Now let us consider the place in " which this sight is presented to us. The place, " forsooth, is a long hall. Let us suppose, that any " one should place himself in this posture, in the " midst of one of our halls in London; that he " should appear *solus*, in a sullen posture, a drawn " sword on the table by him; in his hand Plato's " treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, translated " lately by Bernard Lintot: I desire the reader to " consider, whether such a person as this would pass " with them who beheld him for a great patriot, a " great philosopher, or a general, or some whimsical " person, who fancied himself all these? and whether " the people who belonged to the family, would " think that such a person had a design upon their " midriffs or his own?

" In short, that Cato should sit long enough in " the aforesaid posture, in the midst of this large " hall, to read over Plato's treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, which is a lecture of two long " hours; that he should propose to himself to be " private there upon that occasion; that he should " be angry with his son for intruding there; then, " that he should leave this hall upon the pretence " of sleep, give himself the mortal wound in his " bedchamber and then be brought back into that " hall to expire, purely to shew his good breeding,

" and ſave his friends the trouble of coming up to " his bedchamber; all this appears to me to be im- " probable, incredible, impoſſible."

Such is the cenſure of Dennis. There is, as Dryden expreſſes it, perhaps " too much horſe-play in " his raillery;" but if his jeſts are coarſe, his arguments are ſtrong. Yet, as we love better to be pleaſed than be taught, Cato is read, and the critick is neglected.

Fluſhed with conſciouſneſs of theſe detections of abſurdity in the conduct, he afterwards attacked the ſentiments of Cato; but he then amuſed himſelf with petty cavils and minute objections.

Of Addiſon's ſmaller poems, no particular mention is neceſſary; they have little that can employ or require a critick. The parallel of the Princes and Gods in his verſes to Kneller, is often happy, but is too well known to be quoted.

His tranſlations, ſo far as I have compared them, want the exactneſs of a ſcholar. That he underſtood his authors cannot be doubted; but his verſions will not teach others to underſtand them, being too licentiouſly paraphraſtical. They are, however, for the moſt part, ſmooth and eaſy; and, what is the firſt excellence of a tranſlator, ſuch as may be read with pleaſure by thoſe who do not know the originals.

His poetry is poliſhed and pure; the product of a mind too judicious to commit faults, but not ſufficiently vigorous to attain excellence. He has ſometimes a ſtriking line, or a ſhining paragraph; but in the whole he is warm rather than fervid, and ſhews more

more dexterity than ſtrength. He was however one of our earlieſt examples of correctneſs.

The verſification which he had learned from Dryden he debaſed rather than refined. His rhymes are often diſſonant; in his Georgick he admits broken lines. He uſes both triplets and alexandrines, but triplets more frequently in his tranſlation than his other works. The mere ſtructure of verſes ſeems never to have engaged much of his care. But his lines are very ſmooth in Roſamond, and too ſmooth in Cato.

Addiſon is now to be conſidered as a critick; a name which the preſent generation is ſcarcely willing to allow him. His criticiſm is condemned as tentative or experimental, rather than ſcientifick; and he is conſidered as deciding by taſte rather than by principles.

It is not uncommon, for thoſe who have grown wiſe by the labour of others, to add a little of their own, and overlook their maſters. Addiſon is now deſpiſed by ſome who perhaps would never have ſeen his defects, but by the lights which he afforded them. That he always wrote as he would think it neceſſary to write now, cannot be affirmed; his inſtructions were ſuch as the characters of his readers made proper. That general knowledge which now circulates in common talk, was in his time rarely to be found. Men not profeſſing learning were not aſhamed of ignorance; and, in the female world, any acquaintance with books was diſtinguiſhed only to be cenſured. His purpoſe was to infuſe literary curioſity by gentle and unſuſpected conveyance, into the gay, the idle, and the wealthy; he therefore preſented knowledge

in the moſt alluring form, not lofty and auſtere, but acceſſible and familiar. When he ſhewed them their defects, he ſhewed them likewiſe that they might be eaſily ſupplied. His attempt ſucceeded; enquiry was awakened, and comprehenſion expanded. An emulation of intellectual elegance was excited, and from this time to our own life has been gradually exalted, and converſation purified and enlarged.

Dryden had, not many years before, ſcattered criticiſm over his Prefaces with very little parſimony; but though he ſometimes condeſcended to be ſomewhat familiar, his manner was in general too ſcholaſtick for thoſe who had yet their rudiments to learn, and found it not eaſy to underſtand their maſter. His obſervations were framed rather for thoſe that were learning to write, than for thoſe that read only to talk.

An inſtructor like Addiſon was now wanting, whoſe remarks being ſuperficial might be eaſily underſtood, and being juſt might prepare the mind for more attainments. Had he preſented *Paradiſe Loſt* to the publick with all the pomp of ſyſtem and ſeverity of ſcience, the criticiſm would perhaps have been admired, and the poem ſtill have been neglected; but by the blandiſhments of gentleneſs and facility he has made Milton an univerſal favourite, with whom readers of every claſs think it neceſſary to be pleaſed.

He deſcended now and then to lower diſquiſitions; and by a ſerious diſplay of the beauties of *Chevy-Chaſe* expoſed himſelf to the ridicule of Wagſtaff, who beſtowed a like pompous character on *Tom Thumb*; and to the contempt of Dennis, who, conſidering

fidering the fundamental pofition of his criticifm, that *Chevy-Chafe* pleafes and ought to pleafe, becaufe it is natural, obferves, "that there is a way of de-"viating from nature, by bombaft or tumour, which "foars above nature, and enlarges images beyond "their real bulk; by affectation, which forfakes na-"ture in queft of fomething unfuitable; and by im-"becillity, which degrades nature by faintnefs and "diminution, by obfcuring its appearances, and "weakening its effects." In *Chevy-Chafe* there is not much of either bombaft or affectation; but there is chill and lifelefs imbecillity. The ftory cannot poffibly be told in a manner that fhall make lefs impreffion on the mind.

Before the profound obfervers of the prefent race repofe too fecurely on the confcioufnefs of their fuperiority to Addifon, let them confider his Remarks on Ovid, in which may be found fpecimens of criticifm fufficiently fubtle and refined: let them perufe likewife his Effays on *Wit*, and on the *Pleafures of Imagination*, in which he founds art on the bafe of nature, and draws the principles of invention from difpofitions inherent in the mind of man with fkill and elegance, fuch as his contemners will not eafily attain.

As a defcriber of life and manners, he muft be allowed to ftand perhaps the firft of the firft rank. His humour, which, as Steele obferves, is peculiar to himfelf, is fo happily diffufed as to give the grace of novelty to domeftic fcenes and daily occurrences. He never "outfteps the modefty of nature," nor raifes merriment or wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by diftortion, nor amaze by

by aggravation. He copies life with ſo much fidelity, that he can be hardly ſaid to invent; yet his exhibitions have an air ſo much original, that it is difficult to ſuppoſe them not merely the product of imagination.

As a teacher of wiſdom, he may be confidently followed. His religion has nothing in it enthuſiaſtick or ſuperſtitious: he appears neither weakly credulous, nor wantonly ſceptical; his morality is neither dangerouſly lax, nor impracticably rigid. All the enchantment of fancy, and all the cogency of argument are employed to recommend to the reader his real intereſt, the care of pleaſing the Author of his being. Truth is ſhewn ſometimes as the phantom of a viſion; ſometimes appears half-veiled in an allegory; ſometimes attracts regard in the robes of fancy; and ſometimes ſteps forth in the confidence of reaſon. She wears a thouſand dreſſes, and in all is pleaſing,

Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.

His proſe is the model of the middle ſtyle; on grave ſubjects not formal, on light occaſions not groveling; pure without ſcrupuloſity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always eaſy, without glowing words or pointed ſentences. Addiſon never deviates from his track to ſnatch a grace; he ſeeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected ſplendour.

It was apparently his principal endeavour to avoid all harſhneſs and ſeverity of diction; he is therefore ſome-

ſometimes verboſe in his tranſitions and connections, and ſometimes deſcends too much to the language of converſation; yet if his language had been leſs idiomatical, it might have loſt ſomewhat of its genuine Angliciſm. What he attempted, he performed; he is never feeble, and he did not wiſh to be energetick; he is never rapid, and he never ſtagnates. His ſentences have neither ſtudied amplitude, nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and eaſy. Whoever wiſhes to attain an Engliſh ſtyle, familiar but not coarſe, and elegant but not oſtentatious, muſt give his days and nights to the volumes of Addiſon.

H U G H E S.

JOHN HUGHES, the ſon of a citizen in London, and of Anne Burgeſs, of an ancient family in Wiltſhire, was born at Marlborough, July 29, 1677. He was educated at a private ſchool; and though his advances in literature are, in the *Biographia*, very oſtentatiouſly diſplayed, the name of his maſter is ſomewhat ungratefully concealed *.

At nineteen he drew the plan of a tragedy; and paraphraſed, rather too profuſely, the ode of Horace which begins "Integer Vitæ." To poetry he added the ſcience of muſick, in which he ſeems to have attained conſiderable ſkill, together with the practice of deſign, or rudiments of painting.

His ſtudies did not withdraw him wholly from buſineſs, nor did buſineſs hinder him from ſtudy. He had a place in the office of ordnance; and was ſecre-

* He was educated in a diſſenting academy, of which the Rev. Mr. Thomas Rowe was tutor; and was fellow-ſtudent there with Dr. Iſaac Watts, Mr. Samuel Say, and other perſons of eminence. In the "Horæ Lyricæ" of Dr. Watts is a poem to the memory of Mr. Rowe. H.

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tary to ſeveral commiſſions for purchaſing lands neceſſary to ſecure the royal docks at Chatham and Portſmouth; yet found time to acquaint himſelf with modern languages.

In 1697 he publiſhed a poem on the *Peace of Ryſwick:* and 1699 another piece, called *The Court of Neptune,* on the return of king William, which he addreſſed to Mr. Montague, the general patron of the followers of the Muſes. The ſame year he produced a ſong on the duke of Glouceſter's birth-day.

He did not confine himſelf to poetry, but cultivated other kinds of writing with great ſucceſs; and about this time ſhewed his knowledge of human nature by an *Eſſay on the Pleaſure of being deceived.* In 1702 he publiſhed, on the death of king William, a Pindarick ode, called *The Houſe of Naſſau*; and wrote another paraphraſe on the *Otium Divos* of Horace.

In 1703 his ode on Muſick was performed at Stationers Hall; and he wrote afterwards ſix cantatas, which were ſet to muſick by the greateſt maſter of that time, and ſeem intended to oppoſe or exclude the Italian opera, an exotick and irrational entertainment, which has been always combated, and always has prevailed.

His reputation was now ſo far advanced, that the publick began to pay reverence to his name; and he was ſolicited to prefix a preface to the tranſlation of *Boccalini*, a writer whoſe ſatirical vein coſt him his life in Italy, and who never, I believe, found many readers in this country, even though introduced by ſuch powerful recommendation.

He

He tranflated Fontenelle's *Dialogues of the Dead*; and his verfion was perhaps read at that time, but is now neglected; for by a book not neceffary, and owing its reputation wholly to its turn of diction, little notice can be gained but from thofe who can enjoy the graces of the original. To the Dialogues of Fontenelle he added two compofed by himfelf; and, though not only an honeft but a pious man, dedicated his work to the Earl of Wharton.[e] He judged fkilfully enough of his own intereft; for Wharton, when he went lord lieutenant to Ireland, offered to take Hughes with him, and eftablifh him; but Hughes, having hopes or promifes, from another man in power, of fome provifion more fuitable to his inclination, declined Wharton's offer, and obtained nothing from the other.

He tranflated the *Mifer* of Moliere, which he never offered to the ftage; and occafionally amufed himfelf with making verfions of favourite fcenes in other plays.

Being now received as a wit among the wits, he paid his contributions to literary undertakings, and affifted both the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. In 1712 he tranflated Vertot's Hiftory of the *Revolution of Portugal*; produced an *Ode to the Creator of the World, from the Fragments of Orpheus*; and brought upon the ftage an opera called *Calypfo and Telemachus*, intended to fhew that the Englifh language might be very happily adapted to mufick. This was impudently oppofed by thofe who were employed in the Italian opera; and, what cannot be told without indignation, the intruders had fuch intereft with the duke of Shrewfbury, then lord chamberlain, who had married an

an Italian, as to obtain an obſtruction of the profits, though not an inhibition of the performance.

There was at this time a project formed by Tonſon for a tranſlation of the *Pharſalia* by ſeveral hands; and Hughes engliſhed the tenth book. But this deſign, as muſt often happen when the concurrence of many is neceſſary, fell to the ground; and the whole work was afterwards performed by Rowe.

His acquaintance with the great writers of his time appears to have been very general; but of his intimacy with Addiſon there is a remarkable proof. It is told on good authority, that *Cato* was finiſhed and played by his perſuaſion. It had long wanted the laſt act, which he was deſired by Addiſon to ſupply. If the requeſt was ſincere, it proceeded from an opinion, whatever it was, that did not laſt long; for, when Hughes came in a week to ſhew him his firſt attempt, he found half an act written by Addiſon himſelf.

He afterwards publiſhed the works of *Spenſer*, with his Life, a Gloſſary, and a Diſcourſe on Allegorical Poetry; a work for which he was well qualified as a judge of the beauties of writing, but perhaps wanted an antiquary's knowledge of the obſelete words. He did not much revive the curioſity of the publick; for near thirty years elapſed before his edition was reprinted. The ſame year produced his *Apollo and Daphne*, of which the ſucceſs was very earneſtly promoted by Steele, who, when the rage of party did not miſguide him, ſeems to have been a man of boundleſs benevolence.

Hughes had hitherto ſuffered the mortifications of a narrow fortune; but in 1717 the lord chancellor Cowper ſet him at eaſe, by making him ſecretary to the commiſſions of the peace; in which he afterwards, by a particular requeſt, deſired his ſucceſſor lord Parker to continue him. He had now affluence; but ſuch is human life, that he had it when his declining health could neither allow him long poſſeſſion, nor quick enjoyment.

His laſt work was his tragedy, *The Siege of Damaſcus*, after which *a Siege* became a popular title. This play, which ſtill continues on the ſtage, and of which it is unneceſſary to add a private voice to ſuch continuance of approbation, is not acted or printed according to the author's original draught, or his ſettled intention. He had made *Phocyas* apoſtatize from his religion; after which the abhorrence of *Eudocia* would have been reaſonable, his miſery would have been juſt and the horrors of his repentance exemplary. The players, however, required that the guilt of *Phocyas* ſhould terminate in deſertion to the enemy; and Hughes, unwilling that his relations ſhould loſe the benefit of his work, complied with the alteration.

He was now weak with a lingering conſumption, and not able to attend the rehearſal, yet was ſo vigorous in his faculties that only ten days before his death he wrote the dedication to his patron lord Cowper. On February 17, 1719-20, the play was repreſented, and the author died. He lived to hear that it was well received; but paid no regard to the intelligence, being then wholly employed in the meditations of a departing Chriſtian.

A man of his character was undoubtedly regretted; and Steele devoted an eſſay, in the paper called *The Theatre*,

Theatre, to the memory of his virtues. His life is written in the Biographia with ſome degree of favourable partiality: and an account of him is prefixed to his works by his relation the late Mr. Duncombe, a man whoſe blameleſs elegance deſerved the ſame reſpect.

The character of his genius I ſhall tranſcribe from the correſpondence of *Swift* and *Pope*.

"A month ago," ſays Swift, "was ſent me over, "by a friend of mine, the works of *John Hughes*, "Eſquire. They are in proſe and verſe. I never "heard of the man in my life, yet I find your name "as a ſubſcriber. He is too grave a poet for me; "and I think among the *Mediocriſts* in proſe as well "as verſe."

To this pope returns: "To anſwer your queſtion "as to Mr. *Hughes*; what he wanted in genius, he "made up as an honeſt man; but he was of the claſs "you think him."

In Spence's Collections Pope is made to ſpeak of him with ſtill leſs reſpect, as having no claim to poetical reputation but from his tragedy.

THE [library stamp, partly legible]

SHEFFIELD,

DUKE OF

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

JOHN SHEFFIELD, descended from a long series of illustrious ancestors, was born in 1649, the son of Edmund earl of Mulgrave, who died 1658. The young lord was put into the hands of a tutor, with whom he was so little satisfied, that he got rid of him in a short time, and at an age not exceeding twelve years resolved to educate himself. Such a purpose, formed at such an age, and successfully prosecuted, delights as it is strange, and instructs as it is real.

His literary acquisitions are more wonderful, as those years in which they are commonly made were spent by him in the tumult of a military life, or the gaiety of a court. When war was declared against the Dutch, he went at seventeen on-board the ship

in which prince Rupert and the duke of Albemarle ſailed, with the command of the fleet; but by contrariety of winds they were reſtrained from action. His zeal for the king's ſervice was recompenſed by the command of one of the independent troops of horſe, then raiſed to protect the coaſt.

Next year he received a ſummons to Parliament, which, as he was then but eighteen years old, the earl of Northumberland cenſured as at leaſt indecent, and his objection was allowed. He had a quarrel with the earl of Rocheſter, which he has perhaps too oſtentatiouſly related, as Rocheſter's ſurviving ſiſter, the lady Sandwich, is ſaid to have told him with very ſharp reproaches.

When another Dutch war (1672) broke out, he went again a volunteer in the ſhip which the celebrated lord Oſſory commanded; and there made, as he relates, two curious remarks:

"I have obſerved two things, which I dare affirm, "though not generally believed. One was, that the "wind of a cannon bullet, though flying never ſo "near, is incapable of doing the leaſt harm; and "indeed, were it otherwiſe, no man above deck "would eſcape. The other was, that a great ſhot "may be ſometimes avoided, even as it flies, by "changing one's ground a little; for, when the "wind ſometimes blew away the ſmoke, it was ſo "clear a ſun-ſhiny day, that we could eaſily perceive "the bullets (that were half-ſpent) fall into the wa"ter, and from thence bound up again among us, "which gives ſufficient time for making a ſtep or two "on any ſide; though, in ſo ſwift a motion, 'tis hard "to judge well in what line the bullet comes,

" which, if miſtaken, may by removing, coſt a man " his life, inſtead of ſaving it."

His behaviour was ſo favourably repreſented by lord Offory, that he was advanced to the command of the Katharine, the beſt ſecond-rate ſhip in the navy.

He afterwards raiſed a regiment of foot, and commanded it as colonel. The land-forces were ſent aſhore by prince Rupert; and he lived in the camp very familiarly with Schomberg. He was then appointed colonel of the old Holland regiment, together with his own, and had the promiſe of a garter, which he obtained in his twenty-fifth year. He was likewiſe made gentleman of the bed-chamber. He afterwards went into the French ſervice, to learn the art of war under Turenne, but ſtaid only a ſhort time. Being by the duke of Monmouth oppoſed in his pretenſions to the firſt troop of horſe guards, he, in return, made Monmouth ſuſpected by the duke of York. He was not long after, when the unlucky Monmouth fell into diſgrace, recompenſed with the lieutenancy of Yorkſhire, and the government of Hull.

Thus rapidly did he make his way both to military and civil honours and employments; yet, buſy as he was, he did not neglect his ſtudies, but at leaſt cultivated poetry; in which he muſt have been early conſidered as uncommonly ſkilful, if it be true which is reported, that, when he was yet not twenty years old, his recommendation advanced Dryden to the laurel.

The Moors having beſieged Tangier, he was ſent (1680) with two thouſand men to its relief. A ſtrange

ſtrange ſtory is told of the danger to which he was intentionally expoſed in a leaky ſhip, to gratify ſome reſentful jealouſy of the king, whoſe health he therefore would never permit at his table till he ſaw himſelf in a ſafer place. His voyage was proſperouſly performed in three weeks; and the Moors without a conteſt retired before him.

In this voyage he compoſed the *Viſion*; a licentious poem, ſuch as was faſhionable in thoſe times, with little power of invention or propriety of ſentiment.

At his return he found the king kind, who perhaps had never been angry; and he continued a wit and a courtier as before.

At the ſucceſſion of king James, to whom he was intimately known, and by whom he thought himſelf beloved, he naturally expected ſtill brighter ſunſhine; but all know how ſoon that reign began to gather clouds. His expectations were not diſappointed; he was immediately admitted into the privy-council, and made lord chamberlain. He accepted a place in the high commiſſion, without knowledge, as he declared after the Revolution, of its illegality. Having few religious ſcruples, he attended the king to maſs, and kneeled with the reſt; but had no diſpoſition to receive the Romiſh Faith, or to force it upon others; for when the prieſts, encouraged by his appearances of compliance, attempted to convert him, he told them, as Burnet has recorded, that he was willing to receive inſtruction, and that he had taken much pains to believe in God who had made the world and all men in it; but that he ſhould not be eaſily perſuaded *that man was quits, and made God again.*

 A pointed

A pointed ſentence is beſtowed by ſucceſſive tranſmiſſion to the laſt whom it will fit; this cenſure of tranſubſtantiation, whatever be its value, was uttered long ago by Anne Aſkew, one of the firſt ſufferers for the Proteſtant Religion, who, in the time of Henry VIII. was tortured in the Tower; concerning which there is reaſon to wonder that it was not known to the Hiſtorian of the Reformation.

In the Revolution he acquieſced, though he did not promote it. There was once a deſign of aſſociating him in the invitation of the prince of Orange; but the earl of Shrewſbury diſcouraged the attempt, by declaring that Mulgrave would never concur. This king William afterwards told him; and aſked what he would have done if the propoſal had been made? "Sir," ſaid he, "I would have diſcovered it "to the king whom I then ſerved." To which king William replied, "I cannot blame you."

Finding king James irremediably excluded, he voted for the conjunctive ſovereignty, upon this principle, that he thought the title of the prince and his conſort equal, and it would pleaſe the prince their protector to have a ſhare in the ſovereignty. This vote gratified king William; yet, either by the king's diſtruſt, or his own diſcontent, he lived ſome years without employment. He looked on the king with malevolence, and, if his verſes or his proſe may be credited, with contempt. He was, notwithſtanding this averſion or indifference, made marquis of Normanby (1694), but ſtill oppoſed the court on ſome important queſtions; yet at laſt he was received into the cabinet council, with a penſion of three thouſand pounds.

At

At the acceffion of queen Anne, whom he is faid to have courted when they were both young, he was highly favoured. Before her coronation (1702) fhe made him lord privy feal, and foon after lieutenant of the North Riding of Yorkfhire. He was then named commiffioner for treating with the Scots about the Union; and was made next year, firft, duke of Normanby, and then of Buckinghamfhire, there being fufpected to be fomewhere a latent claim to the title of Buckingham.

Soon after, becoming jealous of the duke of Marlborough, he refigned the privy-feal, and joined the difcontented Tories in a motion, extremely offenfive to the Queen, for inviting the princefs Sophia to England. The queen courted him back with an offer no lefs than that of chancellorfhip; which he refufed. He now retired from bufinefs, and built that houfe in the Park which is now the Queen's, upon ground granted by the Crown.

When the miniftry was changed (1710), he was made lord chamberlain of the houfehold, and concurred in all tranfactions of that time, except that he endeavoured to protect the Catalans. After the Queen's death, he became a conftant opponent of the court; and, having no publick bufinefs, is fuppofed to have amufed himfelf by writing his tragedies. He died February 24, 1720-21.

He was thrice married; by his two firft wives he had no children; by his third, who was the daughter of king James by the countefs of Dorchefter, and the widow of the earl of Anglefey, he had, befides other children that died early, a fon born in 1716, who died in 1735, and put an end to the line of Sheffield.

field. It is obſervable, that the duke's three wives were all widows. The ducheſs died in 1742.

His character is not to be propoſed as worthy of imitation. His religion he may be ſuppoſed to have learned from Hobbes; and his morality was ſuch as naturally proceeds from looſe opinions. His ſentiments with reſpect to women he picked up in the court of Charles; and his principles concerning property were ſuch as a gaming-table ſupplies. He was cenſured as covetous, and has been defended by an inſtance of inattention to his affairs, as if a man might not at once be corrupted by avarice and idleneſs. He is ſaid, however, to have had much tenderneſs, and to have been very ready to apologiſe for his violences of paſſion.

He is introduced into this collection only as a poet; and, if we credit the teſtimony of his contemporaries, he was a poet of no vulgar rank. But favour and flattery are now at an end; criticiſm is no longer ſoftened by his bounties, or awed by his ſplendour, and, being able to take a more ſteady view, diſcovers him to be a writer that ſometimes glimmers, but rarely ſhines, feebly laborious, and at beſt but pretty. His ſongs are upon common topicks; he hopes, and grieves, and repents, and deſpairs, and rejoices, like any other maker of little ſtanzas; to be great, he hardly tries; to be gay, is hardly in his power.

In the Eſſay on Satire he was always ſuppoſed to have had the help of Dryden. His Eſſay on Poetry is the great work for which he was praiſed by Roſcommon, Dryden, and Pope; and doubtleſs by many more whoſe eulogies have periſhed.

Upon

Upon this piece he appears to have ſet a high value; for he was all his life-time improving it by ſucceſſive reviſals, ſo that there is ſcarcely any poem to be found of which the laſt edition differs more from the firſt. Amongſt other changes, mention is made of ſome compoſitions of Dryden, which were written after the firſt appearance of the Eſſay.

At the time when this work firſt appeared, Milton's fame was not yet fully eſtabliſhed, and therefore Taſſo and Spenſer were ſet before him. The two laſt lines were theſe. The Epick Poet, ſays he,

> Muſt above Milton's lofty flights prevail,
> Succeed where great Torquato, and where greater Spenſer, fail.

The laſt line in ſucceeding editions was ſhortened, and the order of names continued; but now Milton is at laſt advanced to the higheſt place, and the paſſage thus adjuſted:

> Muſt above Taſſo's lofty flights prevail,
> Succeed where Spenſer, and ev'n Milton, fail.

Amendments are ſeldom made without ſome token of a rent: lofty does not ſuit Taſſo ſo well as Milton.

One celebrated line ſeems to be borrowed. The Eſſay calls a perfect character

> A faultleſs monſter which the world ne'er ſaw.

Scaliger, in his poems, terms Virgil *ſine labe monſtrum*. Sheffield can ſcarcely be ſuppoſed to have read Scaliger's poetry, perhaps he found the words in a quotation.

Of

Of this Eſſay, which Dryden has exalted ſo highly, it may be juſtly ſaid that the precepts are judicious, ſometimes new, and often happily expreſſed; but there are, after all the emendations, many weak lines, and ſome ſtrange appearances of negligance; as, when he gives the laws of elegy, he inſiſts upon connection and coherence; without which, ſays he,

> 'Tis epigram, 'tis point, 'tis what you will;
> But not an elegy, nor writ with ſkill,
> No panegyrick, nor a Cooper's Hill.

Who would not ſuppoſe that Waller's Panegyrick and Denham's Cooper's Hill were Elegies?

His verſes are often inſipid; but his memoirs are lively and agreeable; he had the perſpicuity and elegance of an hiſtorian, but not the fire and fancy of a poet.

PRIOR.

PRIOR.

MATTHEW PRIOR is one of thofe that have burft out from an obfcure original to great eminence. He was born July 21, 1664, according to fome, at Winburn in Dorfetfhire, of I know not what parents; others fay, that he was the fon of a joiner of London: he was perhaps willing enough to leave his birth unfettled *, in hope, like Don Quixote, that the hiftorian of his actions might find him fome illuftrious alliance.

* The difficulty of fettling Prior's birth-place is great. In the regifter of his College he is called, at his admiffion by the Prefident, *Matthew Prior* of *Winburn* in *Middlefex*; by himfelf next day, *Matthew Prior* of *Dorfetfhire*, in which county, not in Middlefex, *Winborn*, or *Wimborne*, as it ftands in the *Villare*, is found. When he ftood candidate for his fellowfhip, five years afterwards he was regiftered again by himfelf as of *Middlefex*. The laft record ought to be preferred, becaufe it was made upon oath. It is obfervable, that, as a native of *Winborne*, he is ftiled *Filius Georgii Prior*, *generofi*; not confiftently with the common account of the meannefs of his birth. Dr. J.

He

He is ſuppoſed to have fallen, by his father's death, into the hands of his uncle, a vintner * near Charing-croſs, who ſent him for ſome time to Dr. Buſby, at Weſtminſter; but, not intending to give him any education beyond that of the ſchool, took him, when he was well advanced in literature, to his own houſe, where the earl of Dorſet, celebrated for patronage of genius, found him by chance, as Burnet relates, reading Horace, and was ſo well pleaſed with his proficiency, that he undertook the care and coſt of his academical education.

He entered his name in St. John's College at Cambridge in 1682, in his eighteenth year; and it may be reaſonably ſuppoſed that he was diſtinguiſhed among his contemporaries. He became a Bachelor, as is uſual, in four years †; and two years afterwards wrote the poem on the *Deity*, which ſtands firſt in his volume.

It is the eſtabliſhed practice of that College, to ſend every year to the earl of Exeter ſome poems upon ſacred ſubjects, in acknowledgement of a benefaction enjoyed by them from the bounty of his anceſtor. On this occaſion were thoſe verſes written, which, though nothing is ſaid of their ſucceſs, ſeem to have recommended him to ſome notice; for his praiſe of the counteſs's muſick, and his lines on the famous picture of Seneca, afford reaſon for imagi-

* Samuel Prior kept the Rummer Tavern near Charing Croſs in 1685. The annual feaſt of the nobility and gentry living in the pariſh of St. Martin in the Fields was held at his houſe, Oct. 14, that year. N.

† He was admitted to his Bachelor's degree in 1686; and to his Maſter's, by mandate, in 1700.

ning that he was more or lefs converfant with that family.

The fame year he publifhed the *City Moufe and Country Moufe*, to ridicule Dryden's *Hind and Panther*, in conjunction with Mr. Montague. There is a ftory* of great pain fuffered, and of tears fhed, on this occafion, by Dryden, who thought it hard that "an "old man fhould be fo treated by thofe to whom he "had always been civil." By tales like thefe is the envy, raifed by fuperior abilities, every day gratified: when they are attacked, every one hopes to fee them humbled; what is hoped is readily believed; and what is believed is confidently told. Dryden had been more accuftomed to hoftilities, than that fuch enemies fhould break his quiet; and, if we can fuppofe him vexed, it would be hard to deny him fenfe enough to conceal his uneafinefs.

The *City Moufe and Country Moufe* procured its authors more folid advantages than the pleafure of fretting Dryden; for they were both fpeedily preferred. Montague, indeed, obtained the firft notice, with fome degree of difcontent, as it feems, in Prior, who probably knew that his own part of the performance was the beft. He had not, however, much reafon to complain; for he came to London, and obtained fuch notice, that (in 1691) he was fent to the Congrefs at the Hague as fecretary to the embaffy. In this affembly of princes and nobles, to which Europe has perhaps fcarcely feen any thing equal, was formed the grand alliance againft Lewis, which at laft did not produce effects proportionate to the magnificence of the tranfaction.

* Spence.

The

The conduct of Prior, in this splendid initiation into publick business, was so pleasing to king William, that he made him one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber; and he is supposed to have passed some of the next years in the quiet cultivation of literature and poetry.

The death of queen Mary (in 1695) produced a subject for all the writers: perhaps no funeral was ever so poetically attended. Dryden, indeed, as a man discountenanced and deprived, was silent; but scarcely any other maker of verses omitted to bring his tribute of tuneful sorrow. An emulation of elegy was universal. Maria's praise was not confined to the English language, but fills a great part of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*.

Prior, who was both a poet and a courtier, was too diligent to miss this opportunity of respect. He wrote a long ode, which was presented to the king, by whom it was not likely to be ever read.

In two years he was secretary to another embassy at the treaty of Ryswick (in 1697*); and next year had the same office at the court of France, where he is said to have been considered with great distinction.

As he was one day surveying the apartments at Versailles, being shewn the Victories of Lewis, painted by Le Brun, and asked whether the king of England's palace had any such decorations; "The monuments of my Master's actions," said he, "are to be seen every where but in his own house."

* He received, in September 1697, a present of 200 guineas from the lords justices, for his trouble in bringing over the treaty of peace. N.

The

The pictures of Le Brun are not only in themselves sufficiently ostentatious, but were explained by inscriptions so arrogant, that Boileau and Racine thought it necessary to make them more simple.

He was in the following year at Loo with the king; from whom, after a long audience, he carried orders to England, and upon his arrival became under-secretary of state in the earl of Jersey's office; a post which he did not retain long, because Jersey was removed; but he was soon made commissioner of trade.

This year (1700) produced one of his longest and most splendid compositions, the *Carmen Seculare*, in which he exhausts all his powers of celebration. I mean not to accuse him of flattery: he probably thought all that he writ, and retained as much veracity as can be properly exacted from a poet professedly encomiastick. King William supplied copious materials for either verse or prose. His whole life had been action, and none ever denied him the resplendent qualities of steady resolution and personal courage. He was really in Prior's mind what he represents him in his verses; he considered him as a hero, and was accustomed to say, that he praised others in compliance with the fashion, but that in celebrating king William he followed his inclination. To Prior gratitude would dictate praise, which reason would not refuse.

Among the advantages to arise from the future years of William's reign, he mentions a *Society for useful Arts*, and among them

> Some that with care true eloquence shall teach,
> And to just idioms fix our doubtful speech;

That from our writers diſtant realms may know
The thanks we to our monarchs owe,
And ſchools profeſs our tongue through every land,
That has invok'd his aid, or bleſs'd his hand.

Tickell, in his *Proſpect of Peace*, has the ſame hope of a new academy:

In happy chains our daring language bound,
Shall ſport no more in arbitrary ſound.

Whether the ſimilitude of thoſe paſſages which exhibit the ſame thought on the ſame occaſion proceeded from accident or imitation, is not eaſy to determine. Tickell might have been impreſſed with his expectation by Swift's *Propoſal for aſcertaining the Engliſh Language*, then lately publiſhed.

In the parliament that met in 1701, he was choſen repreſentative of Eaſt Grinſtead. Perhaps it was about this time that he changed his party; for he voted for the impeachment of thoſe lords who had perſuaded the king to the Partition-treaty, a treaty in which he had himſelf been miniſterially employed.

A great part of queen Anne's reign was a time of war, in which there was little employment for negotiators, and Prior had therefore leiſure to make or to poliſh verſes. When the battle of Blenheim called forth all the verſemen, Prior, among the reſt, took care to ſhew his delight in the increaſing honour of his country by an Epiſtle to Boileau.

He publiſhed, ſoon afterwards, a volume of poems, with the encomiaſtick character of his deceaſed patron the duke of Dorſet: it began with the College Exerciſe, and ended with the *Nut-brown Maid*.

The

The battle of Ramillies ſoon afterwards (in 1706) excited him to another effort of poetry. On this occaſion he had fewer or leſs formidable rivals; and it would be not eaſy to name any other compoſition produced by that event which is now remembered.

Every thing has its day. Through the reigns of William and Anne no proſperous event paſſed undignified by poetry. In the laſt war, when France was diſgraced and overpowered in every quarter of the globe, when Spain, coming to her aſſiſtance, only ſhared her calamities, and the name of an Engliſhman was reverenced through Europe, no poet was heard amidſt the general acclamation; the fame of our counſellors and heroes was intruſted to the Gazetteer.

The nation in time grew weary of the war, and the queen grew weary of her miniſters. The war was burdenſome, and the miniſters were inſolent. Harley and his friends began to hope that they might, by driving the Whigs from court and from power, gratify at once the queen and the people. There was now a call for writers, who might convey intelligence of paſt abuſes, and ſhew the waſte of publick money, the unreaſonable *Conduct of the Allies*, the avarice of generals, the tyranny of minions, and the general danger of approaching ruin.

For this purpoſe a paper called the *Examiner* was periodically publiſhed, written, as it happened, by any wit of the party, and ſometimes as is ſaid by Mrs. Manley. Some are owned by Swift; and one, in ridicule of Garth's verſes to Godolphin upon the loſs of his place, was written by Prior, and an-

ſwered by Addiſon, who appears to have known the author either by conjecture or intelligence.

The Tories, who were now in power, were in haſte to end the war; and Prior, being recalled (1710) to his former employment of making treaties, was ſent (July 1711) privately to Paris with propoſitions of peace. He was remembered at the French court; and, returning in about a month, brought with him the Abbé Gaultier, and M. Meſnager, a miniſter from France, inveſted with full powers.

This tranſaction not being avowed, Mackay, the maſter of the Dover packet-boat, either zealouſly or officiouſly, ſeized Prior and his aſſociates at Canterbury. It is eaſily ſuppoſed that they were ſoon releaſed.

The negociation was begun at Prior's houſe, where the queen's miniſters met Meſnager (September 20, 1711), and entered privately upon the great buſineſs. The importance of Prior appears from the mention made of him by St. John in his Letter to the queen.

"My Lord Treaſurer moved, and all my Lords "were of the ſame opinion, that Mr. Prior ſhould be "added to thoſe who are empowered to ſign; the "reaſon for which is, becauſe he, having perſonally "treated with Monſieur de Torcy, is the beſt witneſs "we can produce of the ſenſe in which the general "preliminary engagements are entered into: beſides "which, as he is the beſt verſed in matters of trade "of all your Majeſty's ſervants who have been "truſted in this ſecret, if you ſhall think fit to em-"ploy him in the future treaty of commerce, it "will be of conſequence that he has been a party

"concerned in concluding that convention, which "must be the rule of this treaty."

The assembly of this important night was in some degree clandestine, the design of treating not being yet openly declared, and, when the Whigs returned to power, was aggravated to a charge of high treason; though, as Prior remarks in his imperfect answer to the Report of the *Committee of Secrecy*, no treaty ever was made without private interviews and preliminary discussions.

My business is not the history of the peace, but the life of Prior. The conferences began at Utrecht on the first of January (1711-12), and the English plenipotentiaries arrived on the fifteenth. The ministers of the different potentates conferred and conferred; but the peace advanced so slowly, that speedier methods were found necessary; and Bolingbroke was sent to Paris to adjust differences with less formality; Prior either accompanied him or followed him, and, after his departure, had the appointments and authority of an ambassador, though no publick character.

By some mistake of the queen's orders, the court of France had been disgusted; and Bolingbroke says in his Letter, "Dear Mat, hide the nakedness of "thy country, and give the best turn thy fertile "brain will furnish thee with to the blunders of thy "countrymen, who are not much better politicians "than the French are poets."

Soon after, the duke of Shrewsbury went on a formal embassy to Paris. It is related by Boyer, that the intention was to have joined Prior in the commission, but that Shrewsbury refused to be associated with

with a man ſo meanly born. Prior therefore continued to act without a title till the duke returned next year to England, and then he aſſumed the ſtyle and dignity of ambaſſador.

But, while he continued in appearance a private man, he was treated with confidence by Lewis, who ſent him with a letter to the queen, written in favour of the elector of Bavaria. "I ſhall expect," ſays he, "with impatience, the return of Mr. Prior, "whoſe conduct is very agreeable to me." And while the duke of Shrewſbury was ſtill at Paris, Bolingbroke wrote to Prior thus: "Monſieur de Torcy "has a confidence in you; make uſe of it, once "for all, upon this occaſion, and convince him "thoroughly, that we muſt give a different turn to "our parliament and our people according to their "reſolution at this criſis."

Prior's publick dignity and ſplendour commenced in Auguſt, 1713, and continued till the Auguſt following; but I am afraid that, according to the uſual fate of greatneſs, it was attended with ſome perplexities and mortifications. He had not all that is cuſtomarily given to ambaſſadors: he hints to the queen in an imperfect poem, that he had no ſervice of plate; and it appeared, by the debts which he contracted, that his remittances were not punctually made.

On the firſt of Auguſt, 1714, enſued the downfall of the Tories, and the degradation of Prior. He was recalled; but was not able to return, being detained by the debts which he had found it neceſſary to contract, and which were not diſcharged before

March,

March, though his old friend Montague was now at the head of the treaſury.

He returned then as ſoon as he could, and was welcomed on the 25th of March by a warrant, but was, however, ſuffered to live in his own houſe, under the cuſtody of the meſſenger, till he was examined before a committee of the Privy Council, of which Mr. Walpole was chairman, and Lord Coningſby, Mr. Stanhope, and Mr. Lechmere, were the principal interrogators; who, in this examination, of which there is printed an account not unentertaining, behaved with the boiſterouſneſs of men elated by recent authority. They are repreſented as aſking queſtions ſometimes vague, ſometimes inſidious, and writing anſwers different from thoſe which they received. Prior, however, ſeems to have been overpowered by their turbulence; for he confeſſes that he ſigned what, if he had ever come before a legal judicature, he ſhould have contradicted or explained away. The oath was adminiſtered by Boſcawen, a Middleſex juſtice, who at laſt was going to write his atteſtation on the wrong ſide of the paper.

They were very induſtrious to find ſome charge againſt Oxford; and aſked Prior, with great earneſtneſs, who was preſent when the preliminary articles were talked of or ſigned at his houſe? He told them, that either the earl of Oxford or the duke of Shrewſbury was abſent, but he could not remember which; an anſwer which perplexed them, becauſe it ſupplied no accuſation againſt either. "Could any thing be "more abſurd," ſays he, "or more inhuman, than "to propoſe to me a queſtion, by the anſwering of "which I might, according to them, prove myſelf

"a traitor? And notwithſtanding their ſolemn pro-
"miſe, that nothing which I could ſay ſhould hurt
"myſelf, I had no reaſon to truſt them: for they
"violated that promiſe about five hours after. How-
"ever, I owned I was there preſent. Whether this
"was wiſely done or no, I leave to my friends to
"determine."

When he had ſigned the paper, he was told by Walpole, that the committee were not ſatisfied with his behaviour, nor could give ſuch an account of it to the Commons as might merit favour: and that they now thought a ſtricter confinement neceſſary than to his own houſe. "Here," ſays he, "Boſcawen "played the moraliſt, and Coningſby the Chriſtian, "but both very aukwardly." The meſſenger, in whoſe cuſtody he was to be placed, was then called, and very decently aſked by Coningſby, "if his houſe "was ſecured by bars and bolts?" The meſſenger anſwered, "No," with aſtoniſhment. At which Coningſby very angrily ſaid, "Sir, you muſt ſecure "this priſoner; it is for the ſafety of the nation: if "he eſcape, you ſhall anſwer for it."

They had already printed their report; and in this examination were endeavouring to find proofs.

He continued thus confined for ſome time; and Mr. Walpole (June 10, 1715,) moved for an impeachment againſt him. What made him ſo acrimonious does not appear: he was by nature no thirſter for blood. Prior was a week after committed to cloſe cuſtody, with orders that "no perſon ſhould be ad-"mitted to ſee him without leave from the Speaker."

When, two years after, an Act of Grace was paſſed, he was excepted, and continued ſtill in cuſtody, which

he

he had made lefs tedious by writing his *Alma*. He was, however, foon after difcharged.

He had now his liberty, but he had nothing elfe. Whatever the profit of his employments might have been, he had always fpent it; and at the age of fifty-three was, with all his abilities, in danger of penury, having yet no folid revenue but from the fellowfhip of his college, which, when in his exaltation he was cenfured for retaining it, he faid, he could live upon at laft.

Being however generally known and efteemed, he was encouraged to add other poems to thofe which he had printed, and to publifh them by fubfcription. The expedient fucceeded by the induftry of many friends, who circulated the propofals *, and the care of fome, who, it is faid, withheld the money from him left he fhould fquander it. The price of the volume was two guineas; the whole collection was four thoufand; to which lord Harley, the fon of the earl of Oxford, to whom he had invariably adhered, added an equal fum for the purchafe of Down-hall, which Prior was to enjoy during life, and Harley after his deceafe.

He had now, what wits and philofophers have often wifhed, the power of paffing the day in contemplative tranquillity. But it feems that bufy men feldom live long in a ftate of quiet. It is not unlikely that his health declined. He complains of deafnefs; "for," fays he, "I took little care of my ears while I was "not fure if my head was my own."

Of any occurrences of his remaining life I have found no account. In a letter to Swift, "I have,"

* Swift obtained *many* fubfcriptions for him in Ireland. H.

ſays he, "treated lady Harriot at Cambridge (a "Fellow of a College treat!), and ſpoke verſes to her "in a gown and cap! What, the plenipotentiary, ſo "far concerned in the damned peace at Utrecht; the "man that makes up half the volume of terſe proſe, "that makes up the report of the committee, ſpeak-"ing verſes! *Sic eſt, homo ſum.*"

He died at *Wimpole*, a ſeat of the earl of Oxford, on the eighteenth of September, 1721, and was buried in Weſtminſter; where on a monument, for which, as the "laſt piece of human vanity," he left five hundred pounds, is engraven this epitaph:

Sui Temporis Hiſtoriam meditanti,
Paulatim obrepens Febris
Operi ſimul & Vitæ filum abrupit,
Sept. 18. An. Dom. 1721. Ætat. 57.
H. S. E.
Vir Eximius
Sereniſſimis
Regi GULIELMO Reginæque MARIÆ
In Congreſſione Fœderatorum
Hagæ anno 1690 celebrata,
Deinde Magnæ Britanniæ Legatis
Tum iis,
Qui anno 1697 Pacem RYSWICKI confecerunt,
Tum iis,
Qui apud Gallos annis proximis Legationem obierunt;
Eodem etiam anno 1697 in Hibernia
SECRETARIUS;
Necnon in utroque Honorabili conſeſſu
Eorum,
Qui anno 1700 ordinandis Commercii negotiis,
Quique anno 1711 dirigendis Portorii rebus,
Præſidebant,
COMMISSIONARIUS;

Poſ-

THE TAJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S ... MAHAL

Poſtremo
Ab ANNA
Feliciſſimæ memoriæ Reginâ
Ad LUDOVICUM XIV. Galliæ Regem
Miſſus anno 1711
De Pace ſtabilienda,
(Pace etiamnum durante
Diuque ut boni jam omnes ſperant duratura)
Cum ſumma poteſtate Legatus.
MATTHÆUS PRIOR Armiger:
Qui
Hos omnes, quibus cumulatus eſt, Titulos
Humanitatis, Ingenii, Eruditionis laude
Superavit;
Cui enim naſcenti faciles arriſerant Muſæ.
Hunc Puerum Schola hic Regia perpolivit;
Juvenem in Collegio S'ti Johannis
Cantabrigia optimis Scientiis inſtruxit;
Virum denique auxit; & perfecit
Multa cum viris Principibus conſuetudo;
Ita natus, ita inſtitutus,
A Vatum Choro avelli nunquam potuit,
Sed ſolebat ſæpe rerum Civilium gravitatem
Amœniorum Literarum Studiis condire:
Et cum omne adeo Poetices genus
Haud infeliciter tentaret,
Tum in Fabellis concinne lepideque texendis
Mirus Artifex
Neminem habuit parem.
Hæc liberalis animi oblectamenta:
Quam nullo Illi labore conſtiterint,
Facile ii perſpexere quibus uſus eſt Amici;
Apud quos Urbanitatum & Leporum plenus
Cum ad rem, quæcunque forte inciderat,
Aptè variè copioſèque alluderet,
Interea nihil quæſitum, nihil vi expreſſum
Videbatur,

Sed

Sed omnia ultro effluere,
Et quasi jugi è fonte affatim exuberare,
Ita suos tandem dubios reliquit,
Essetne in Scriptis, Poeta Elegantior,
An in Convictu, Comes Jucundior.

Of Prior, eminent as he was, both by his abilities and station, very few memorials have been left by his contemporaries; the account therefore must now be destitute of his private character and familiar practices. He lived at a time when the rage of party detected all which it was any man's interest to hide; and, as little ill is heard of Prior, it is certain that not much was known. He was not afraid of provoking censure; for when he forsook the Whigs*, under whose patronage he first entered the world, he became a Tory so ardent and determinate, that he did not willingly consort with men of different opinions. He was one of the sixteen Tories who met weekly, and agreed to address each other by the title of *Brother*; and seems to have adhered, not only by concurrence of political designs, but by peculiar affection, to the earl of Oxford and his family. With how much confidence he was trusted has been already told.

He was however, in Pope's* opinion, fit only to make verses, and less qualified for business than Addison himself. This was surely said without consideration. Addison, exalted to a high place, was forced into degradation by the sense of his own incapacity; Prior, who was employed by men very capable of estimating his value, having been secretary to one

* Spence.

embassy,

embaſſy, had, when great abilities were again wanted, the ſame office another time; and was, after ſo much experience of his own knowledge and dexterity, at laſt ſent to tranſact a negociation in the higheſt degree arduous and important, for which he was qualified, among other requiſites, in the opinion of Bolingbroke, by his influence upon the French miniſter, and by ſkill in queſtions of commerce above other men.

Of his behaviour in the lighter parts of life, it is too late to get much intelligence. One of his anſwers to a boaſtful Frenchman has been related; and to an impertinent he made another equally proper. During his embaſſy, he ſat at the opera by a man, who, in his rapture, accompanied with his own voice the principal ſinger. Prior fell to railing at the performer with all the terms of reproach that he could collect, till the Frenchman, ceaſing from his ſong, began to expoſtulate with him for his harſh cenſure of a man who was confeſſedly the ornament of the ſtage. "I know all that," ſays the ambaſſador, "mais il chante ſi haut, que je ne ſçaurois vous entendre."

In a gay French company, where every one ſang a little ſong or ſtanza, of which the burden was, "Banniſſons la Melancholie;" when it came to his turn to ſing, after the performance of a young lady that ſat next him, he produced theſe extemporary lines:

> Mais cette voix, et ces beaux yeux,
> Font Cupidon trop dangereux,
> Et je ſuis triſte quand je crie
> Banniſſons la Melancholie.

Tradition

Tradition reprefents him as willing to defcend from the dignity of the poet and ftatefman to the low delights of mean company. His Chloe probably was fometimes ideal: but the woman with whom he cohabited was a defpicable drab * of the loweft fpecies. One of his wenches, perhaps Chloe, while he was abfent from his houfe, ftole his plate, and ran away; as was related by a woman who had been his fervant. Of this propenfity to fordid converfe I have feen an account fo ferioufly ridiculous, that it feems to deferve infertion †.

"I have been affured that Prior, after having fpent "the evening with Oxford, Bolingbroke, Pope, and "Swift, would go and fmoke a pipe, and drink a "bottle of ale, with a common foldier and his wife, "in Long-Acre, before he went to bed; not from "any remains of the lownefs of his original, as one "faid, but, I fuppofe, that his faculties,

"——Strain'd to the height,
"In that celeftial colloquy fublime,
"Dazzled and fpent, funk down, and fought repair."

Poor Prior, why was he fo *ftrained*, and in fuch *want* of *repair*, after a converfation with men, not, in the opinion of the world, much wifer than himfelf? But fuch are the conceits of fpeculatifts, who *ftrain* their *faculties* to find in a mine what lies upon the furface.

His opinions, fo far as the means of judging are left us, feem to have been right; but his life was, it feems, irregular, negligent, and fenfual.

* Spence; [and fee Gent. Mag. vol. LVII. p. 1039.]
† Richardfoniana.

PRIOR

PRIOR has written with great variety, and his variety has made him popular. He has tried all ſtyles, from the groteſque to the ſolemn, and has not ſo failed in any as to incur deriſion or diſgrace.

His works may be diſtinctly conſidered as comprifing Tales, Love-verſes, Occaſional Poems, Alma, and Solomon.

His Tales have obtained general approbation, being written with great familiarity and great ſprightlineſs; the language is eaſy, but ſeldom groſs, and the numbers ſmooth, without appearance of care. Of theſe Tales there are only four. The *Ladle*; which is introduced by a Preface, neither neceſſary nor pleaſing, neither grave nor merry. *Paulo Purganti*; which has likewiſe a Preface, but of more value than the Tale. *Hans Carvel*, not over decent; and *Protogenes* and *Apelles*, an old ſtory, mingled, by an affectation not diſagreeable, with modern images. The *Young Gentleman in Love* has hardly a juſt claim to the title of *a Tale*. I know not whether he be the original author of any Tale which he has given us. The adventure of *Hans Carvel* has paſſed through many ſucceſſions of merry wits; for it is to be found in Arioſto's Satires, and is perhaps yet older. But the merit of ſuch ſtories is the art of telling them.

In his Amorous Effuſions he is leſs happy; for they are not dictated by nature or by paſſion, and have neither gallantry nor tenderneſs. They have the coldneſs of Cowley, without his wit, the dull exerciſes of a ſkilful verſifier, reſolved at all adventures

to write ſomething about Chloe, and trying to be amorous by dint of ſtudy. His fictions therefore are mythological. Venus, after the example of the Greek Epigram, aſks when ſhe was ſeen *naked and bathing*. Then *Cupid* is *miſtaken*; then *Cupid* is *diſarmed*; then he loſes his darts to *Ganymede*; then *Jupiter* ſends him a ſummons by *Mercury*. Then *Chloe* goes a-hunting, with an *ivory quiver graceful at her ſide*; Diana miſtakes her for one of her nymphs, and Cupid laughs at the blunder. All this is ſurely deſpicable; and even when he tries to act the lover, without the help of gods or goddeſſes, his thoughts are unaffecting or remote. He talks not "like a "man of this world."

The greateſt of all his amorous eſſays is *Henry* and *Emma*; a dull and tedious dialogue, which excites neither eſteem for the man, nor tenderneſs for the woman. The example of Emma, who reſolves to follow an outlawed murderer wherever fear and guilt ſhall drive him, deſerves no imitation; and the experiment by which Henry tries the lady's conſtancy, is ſuch as muſt end either in infamy to her, or in diſappointment to himſelf.

His occaſional Poems neceſſarily loſt part of their value, as their occaſions, being leſs remembered, raiſed leſs emotion. Some of them, however, are preſerved by their inherent excellence. The burleſque of Boileau's Ode on Namur has, in ſome parts, ſuch airineſs and levity as will always procure it readers, even among thoſe who cannot compare it with the original. The Epiſtle to Boileau is not ſo happy. The Poems to the King are now peruſed only

only by young ſtudents, who read merely that they may learn to write; and of the *Carmen Seculare*, I cannot but ſuſpect that I might praiſe or cenſure it by caprice, without danger or detection; for who can be ſuppoſed to have laboured through it? Yet the time has been when this neglected work was ſo popular, that it was tranſlated into Latin by no common maſter.

His Poem on the battle of Ramillies is neceſſarily tedious by the form of the ſtanza: an uniform maſs of ten lines thirty-five times repeated, inconſequential and ſlightly connected, muſt weary both the ear and the underſtanding. His imitation of Spenſer, which conſiſts principally in *I ween* and *I weet*, without excluſion of later modes of ſpeech, makes his poem neither ancient nor modern. His mention of *Mars* and *Bellona*, and his compariſon of Marlborough to the Eagle that bears the thunder of *Jupiter*, are all puerile and unaffecting; and yet more deſpicable is the long tale told by *Lewis* in his deſpair of *Brute* and *Troynovante*, and the teeth of *Cadmus*, with his ſimilies of the raven and eagle and wolf and lion. By the help of ſuch eaſy fictions, and vulgar topicks, without acquaintance with life, and without knowledge of art or nature, a poem of any length, cold and lifeleſs like this, may be eaſily written on any ſubject.

In his Epilogues to *Phædra* and to *Lucius* he is very happily facetious; but in the Prologue before the queen, the pedant has found his way, with Minerva, Perſeus, and Andromeda.

His Epigrams and lighter pieces are, like thoſe of others, ſometimes elegant, ſometimes trifling, and

ſometimes dull ; among the beſt are the *Camelion*, and the epitaph on *John* and *Joan*.

Scarcely any one of our poets has written ſo much, and tranſlated ſo little : the verſion of Callimachus is ſufficiently licentious ; the paraphraſe on St. Paul's Exhortation to Charity is eminently beautiful.

Alma is written in profeſſed imitation of Hudibras, and has at leaſt one accidental reſemblance : Hudibras wants a plan, becauſe it is left imperfect ; Alma is imperfect, becauſe it ſeems never to have had a plan. Prior appears not to have propoſed to himſelf any drift or deſign, but to have written the caſual dictates of the preſent moment.

What Horace ſaid, when he imitated Lucilius, might be ſaid of Butler by Prior ; his numbers were not ſmooth or neat. Prior excelled him in verſification ; but he was, like Horace, *inventore minor* ; he had not Butler's exuberance of matter and variety of illuſtration. The ſpangles of wit which he could afford, he knew how to poliſh ; but he wanted the bullion of his maſter. Butler pours out a negligent profuſion, certain of the weight, but careleſs of the ſtamp. Prior has comparatively little, but with that little he makes a fine ſhow. Alma has many admirers, and was the only piece among Prior's works of which Pope ſaid that he ſhould wiſh to be the author.

Solomon is the work to which he entruſted the protection of his name, and which he expected ſucceeding ages to regard with veneration. His affection was natural ; it had undoubtedly been written with great labour ; and who is willing to think that he has

been

been labouring in vain? He had infused into it much knowledge and much thought; had often polished it to elegance, often dignified it with splendour, and sometimes heightened it to sublimity: he perceived in it many excellences, and did not discover that it wanted that without which all others are of small avail, the power of engaging attention and alluring curiosity.

Tediousness is the most fatal of all faults; negligences or errors are single and local, but tediousness pervades the whole; other faults are censured and forgotten, but the power of tediousness propagates itself. He that is weary the first hour, is more weary the second; as bodies forced into motion, contrary to their tendency, pass more and more slowly through every successive interval of space.

Unhappily this pernicious failure is that which an author is least able to discover. We are seldom tiresome to ourselves; and the act of composition fills and delights the mind with change of language and succession of images; every couplet when produced is new, and novelty is the great source of pleasure. Perhaps no man ever thought a line superfluous when he first wrote it, or contracted his work till his ebullitions of invention had subsided. And even if he should controul his desire of immediate renown, and keep his work *nine years* unpublished, he will be still the author, and still in danger of deceiving himself: and if he consults his friends, he will probably find men who have more kindness than judgement, or more fear to offend than desire to instruct.

The tediousness of this poem proceeds not from the uniformity of the subject, for it is sufficiently

diverſified, but from the continued tenour of the narration; in which Solomon relates the ſucceſſive viciſſitudes of his own mind, without the intervention of any other ſpeaker, or the mention of any other agent, unleſs it be Abra; the reader is only to learn what he thought, and to be told that he thought wrong. The event of every experiment is foreſeen, and therefore the proceſs is not much regarded.

Yet the work is far from deſerving to be neglected. He that ſhall peruſe it will be able to mark many paſſages, to which he may recur for inſtruction or delight; many from which the poet may learn to write, and the philoſopher to reaſon.

If Prior's poetry be generally conſidered, his praiſe will be that of correctneſs and induſtry, rather than of compaſs of comprehenſion, or activity of fancy. He never made any effort of invention: his greater pieces are only tiſſues of common thoughts; and his ſmaller, which conſiſt of light images or ſingle conceits, are not always his own. I have traced him among the French Epigrammatiſts, and have been informed that he poached for prey among obſcure authors. The *Thief and Cordelier* is, I ſuppoſe, generally conſidered as an original production; with how much juſtice this Epigram may tell, which was written by Georgius Sabinus, a poet now little known or read, though once the friend of Luther and Melancthon:

De Sacerdote Furem conſolante.

Quidam ſacrificus furem comitatus euntem
Huc ubi dat fontes carnificina neci,
Ne ſis mœſtus, ait; ſummi conviva Tonantis
Jam cum cœlitibus (ſi modo credis) eris.

Ille

Ille gemens, si vera mihi solatia præbes,
  Hospes apud superos sis meus oro, refert.
Sacrificus contra; mihi non convivia fas est
  Ducere, jejunas hac edo luce nihil.

What he has valuable he owes to his diligence and his judgement. His diligence has justly placed him amongst the most correct of the English poets; and he was one of the first that resolutely endeavoured at correctness. He never sacrifices accuracy to haste, nor indulges himself in contemptuous negligence, or impatient idleness: he has no careless lines, or entangled sentiments; his words are nicely selected, and his thoughts fully expanded. If this part of his character suffers an abatement, it must be from the disproportion of his rhymes, which have not always sufficient consonance, and from the admission of broken lines into his *Solomon*; but perhaps he thought, like Cowley, that hemistichs ought to be admitted into heroic poetry.

He had apparently such rectitude of judgement as secured him from every thing that approached to the ridiculous or absurd; but as laws operate in civil agency not to the excitement of virtue, but the repression of wickedness, so judgement in the operations of intellect can hinder faults, but not produce excellence. Prior is never low, nor very often sublime. It is said by Longinus of Euripides, that he forces himself sometimes into grandeur by violence of effort, as the lion kindles his fury by the lashes of his own tail. Whatever Prior obtains above mediocrity seems the effort of struggle and of toil. He has many vigorous but few happy lines; he has every thing by purchase, and nothing by gift; he had no *nightly*

visitations of the Muse, no infusions of sentiment or felicities of fancy.

His diction, however, is more his own than of any among the successors of Dryden; he borrows no lucky turns, or commodious modes of language, from his predecessors. His phrases are original, but they are sometimes harsh; as he inherited no elegances, none has he bequeathed. His expression has every mark of laborious study; the line seldom seems to have been formed at once; the words did not come till they were called, and were then put by constraint into their places, where they do their duty, but do it sullenly. In his greater compositions there may be found more rigid stateliness than graceful dignity.

Of versification he was not negligent: what he received from Dryden he did not lose; neither did he increase the difficulty of writing by unnecessary severity, but uses triplets and alexandrines without scruple. In his Preface to *Solomon* he proposes some improvements by extending the sense from one couplet to another, with variety of pauses. This he has attempted, but without success; his interrupted lines are unpleasing, and his sense as less distinct is less striking.

He has altered the Stanza of Spenser, as a house is altered by building another in its place of a different form. With how little resemblance he has formed his new Stanza to that of his master, these specimens will shew:

SPENSER.

She flying fast from Heaven's hated face,
And from the world that her discover'd wide,
Fled to the wasteful wilderness apace,
From living eyes her open shame to hide,

And

And lurk'd in rocks and caves long unespy'd.
But that fair crew of knights, and Una fair,
Did in that castle afterwards abide,
To rest themselves, and weary powers repair,
Where store they found of all, that dainty was and rare.

P R I O R.

To the close rock the frighted raven flies,
Soon as the rising eagle cuts the air:
The shaggy wolf unseen and trembling lies,
When the hoarse roar proclaims the lion near.
Ill-starr'd did we our forts and lines forsake,
To dare our British foes to open fight:
Our conquest we by stratagem should make:
Our triumph had been founded in our flight.
'Tis ours, by craft and by surprise to gain:
'Tis theirs, to meet in arms, and battle in the plain.

By this new structure of his lines he has avoided difficulties; nor am I sure that he has lost any of the power of pleasing; but he no longer imitates Spenser.

Some of his poems are written without regularity of measures; for, when he commenced poet, he had not recovered from our Pindarick infatuation; but he probably lived to be convinced, that the essence of verse is order and consonance.

His numbers are such as mere diligence may attain; they seldom offend the ear, and seldom sooth it; they commonly want airiness, lightness, and facility: what is smooth, is not soft. His verses always roll, but they seldom flow.

A survey of the life and writings of Prior may exemplify a sentence which he doubtless understood well, when he read Horace at his uncle's; "the

" vessel long retains the scent which it first receives." In his private relaxation he revived the tavern, and in his amorous pedantry he exhibited the college. But on higher occasions and nobler subjects, when habit was overpowered by the necessity of reflection, he wanted not wisdom as a statesman, or elegance as a poet.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

C O N G R E V E.

WILLIAM CONGREVE descended from a family in Staffordshire, of so great antiquity that it claims a place among the few that extend their line beyond the Norman Conquest; and was the son of William Congreve, second son of Richard Congreve, of Congreve and Stratton. He visited, once at least, the residence of his ancestors; and, I believe, more places than one are still shewn, in groves and gardens, where he is related to have written his *Old Batchelor*.

Neither the time nor place of his birth are certainly known; if the inscription upon his monument be true, he was born in 1672. For the place; it was said by himself, that he owed his nativity to England, and by every body else that he was born in Ireland. Southern mentioned him with sharp censure, as a man that meanly disowned his native country. The biographers assigned his nativity to Bardsa, near Leeds in Yorkshire, from the account given by himself, as they suppose, to Jacob.

To

To doubt whether a man of eminence has told the truth about his own birth, is, in appearance, to be very deficient in candour; yet nobody can live long without knowing that falsehoods of convenience or vanity, falsehoods from which no evil immediately visible ensues, except the general degradation of human testimony, are very lightly uttered, and once uttered are sullenly supported. Boileau, who desired to be thought a rigorous and steady moralist, having told a pretty lie to Lewis XIV. continued it afterwards by false dates; thinking himself obliged *in honour*, says his admirer, to maintain what, when he said it, was so well received.

Wherever Congreve was born, he was educated first at Kilkenny, and afterwards at Dublin, his father having some military employment that stationed him in Ireland: but after having passed through the usual preparatory studies, as may be reasonably supposed, with great celerity and success, his father thought it proper to assign him a profession, by which something might be gotten; and about the time of the Revolution sent him, at the age of sixteen, to study law in the Middle Temple, where he lived for several years, but with very little attention to Statutes or Reports.

His disposition to become an author appeared very early, as he very early felt that force of imagination, and possessed that copiousness of sentiment, by which intellectual pleasure can be given. His first performance was a novel, called *Incognita, or Love and Duty reconciled:* it is praised by the biographers, who quote some part of the Preface, that is, indeed, for such

ſuch a time of life, uncommonly judicious. I would rather praiſe it than read it.

His firſt dramatick labour was *The Old Batchelor*; of which he ſays, in his defence againſt Collier, "that comedy was written, as ſeveral know, ſome "years before it was acted. When I wrote it, I had "little thoughts of the ſtage; but did it, to amuſe "myſelf in a ſlow recovery from a fit of ſickneſs. "Afterwards, through my indiſcretion, it was ſeen, "and in ſome little time more it was acted; and I, "through the remainder of my indiſcretion, ſuf-"fered myſelf to be drawn in to the proſecution "of a difficult and thankleſs ſtudy, and to be in-"volved in a perpetual war with knaves and fools."

There ſeems to be a ſtrange affectation in authors of appearing to have done every thing by chance. *The Old Batchelor* was written for amuſement, in the languor of convaleſcence. Yet it is apparently compoſed with great elaborateneſs of dialogue, and inceſſant ambition of wit. The age of the writer conſidered, it is indeed a very wonderful performance; for, whenever written, it was acted (1693) when he was not more than twenty-one years old; and was then recommended by Mr. Dryden, Mr. Southern, and Mr. Maynwaring. Dryden ſaid, that he never had ſeen ſuch a firſt play; but they found it deficient in ſome things requiſite to the ſucceſs of its exhibition, and by their greater experience fitted it for the ſtage. Southern uſed to relate of one comedy, probably of this, that, when Congreve read it to the players, he pronounced it ſo wretchedly, that they had almoſt rejected it; but they were afterwards ſo well perſuaded of its excellence, that, for half a

year

year before it was acted, the manager allowed its author the privilege of the houſe.

Few plays have ever been ſo beneficial to the writer; for it procured him the patronage of Halifax, who immediately made him one of the commiſſioners for licenſing coaches, and ſoon after gave him a place in the pipe-office, and another in the cuſtoms of ſix hundred pounds a year. Congreve's converſation muſt ſurely have been at leaſt equally pleaſing with his writings.

Such a comedy, written at ſuch an age, requires ſome conſideration. As the lighter ſpecies of dramatick poetry profeſſes the imitation of common life, of real manners, and daily incidents, it apparently preſuppoſes a familiar knowledge of many characters, and exact obſervation of the paſſing world; the difficulty therefore is, to conceive how this knowledge can be obtained by a boy.

But if *The Old Batchelor* be more nearly examined, it will be found to be one of thoſe comedies which may be made by a mind vigorous and acute, and furniſhed with comick characters by the peruſal of other poets, without much actual commerce with mankind. The dialogue is one conſtant reciprocation of conceits, or claſh of wit, in which nothing flows neceſſarily from the occaſion, or is dictated by nature. The characters both of men and women are either fictitious and artificial, as thoſe of *Heartwell* and the Ladies; or eaſy and common, as *Wittol* a tame idiot, *Bluff* a ſwaggering coward, and *Fondlewife* a jealous puritan; and the cataſtrophe ariſes from a miſtake not very probably produced, by marrying a woman in a maſk.

Yet

Yet this gay comedy, when all theſe deductions are made, will ſtill remain the work of very powerful and fertile faculties: the dialogue is quick and ſparkling, the incidents ſuch as ſeize the attention, and the wit ſo exuberant that it "o'er-informs its tenement."

Next year he gave another ſpecimen of his abilities in *The Double Dealer*, which was not received with equal kindneſs. He writes to his patron the lord Halifax a dedication, in which he endeavours to reconcile the reader to that which found few friends among the audience. Theſe apologies are always uſeleſs: "de guſtibus non eſt diſputandum;" men may be convinced, but they cannot be pleaſed, againſt their will. But though taſte is obſtinate, it is very variable, and time often prevails when arguments have failed.

Queen Mary conferred upon both thoſe plays the honour of her preſence; and when ſhe died, ſoon after, Congreve teſtified his gratitude by a deſpicable effuſion of elegiac paſtoral; a compoſition in which all is unnatural, and yet nothing is new.

In another year (1695) his prolifick pen produced *Love for Love*; a comedy of nearer alliance to life, and exhibiting more real manners, than either of the former. The character of *Foreſight* was then common. Dryden calculated nativities; both Cromwell and king William had their lucky days; and Shafteſbury himſelf, though he had no religion, was ſaid to regard predictions. The *Sailor* is not accounted very natural, but he is very pleaſant.

With this play was opened the New Theatre, under the direction of Betterton the tragedian; where he

he exhibited two years afterwards (1687) *The Mourning Bride*, a tragedy, ſo written as to ſhew him ſufficiently qualified for either kind of dramatick poetry.

In this play, of which, when he afterwards reviſed it, he reduced the verſification to greater regularity, there is more buſtle than ſentiment; the plot is buſy and intricate, and the events take hold on the attention; but, except a very few paſſages, we are rather amuſed with noiſe, and perplexed with ſtratagem, than entertained with any true delineation of natural characters. This, however, was received with more benevolence than any other of his works, and ſtill continues to be acted and applauded.

But whatever objections may be made either to his comick or tragick excellence, they are loſt at once in the blaze of admiration, when it is remembered that he had produced theſe four plays before he had paſſed his twenty-fifth year, before other men, even ſuch as are ſome time to ſhine in eminence, have paſſed their probation of literature, or preſume to hope for any other notice than ſuch as is beſtowed on diligence and enquiry. Among all the efforts of early genius which literary hiſtory records, I doubt whether any one can be produced that more ſurpaſſes the common limits of nature than the plays of Congreve.

About this time began the long-continued controverſy between Collier and the poets. In the reign of Charles the Firſt the Puritans had raiſed a violent clamour againſt the drama, which they conſidered as an entertainment not lawful to Chriſtians, an opinion held by them in common with the church of Rome; and Prynne publiſhed *Hiſtrio-maſtix*, a huge volume

volume in which ſtage-plays were cenſured. The outrages and crimes of the Puritans brought afterwards their whole ſyſtem of doctrine into diſrepute, and from the Reſtoration the poets and players were left at quiet; for to have moleſted them would have had the appearance of tendency to puritanical malignity.

This danger, however, was worn away by time; and Collier, a fierce and implacable Non-juror, knew that an attack upon the theatre would never make him ſuſpected for a Puritan; he therefore (1698) publiſhed *A ſhort View of the Immorality and Profaneneſs of the Engliſh Stage*, I believe with no other motive than religious zeal and honeſt indignation. He was formed for a controvertiſt; with ſufficient learning; with diction vehement and pointed, though often vulgar and incorrect; with unconquerable pertinacity; with wit in the higheſt degree keen and ſarcaſtick; and with all thoſe powers exalted and invigorated by juſt confidence in his cauſe.

Thus qualified, and thus incited, he walked out to battle, and aſſailed at once moſt of the living writers, from Dryden to Durfey. His onſet was violent; thoſe paſſages, which while they ſtood ſingle had paſſed with little notice, when they were accumulated and expoſed together, excited horror; the wiſe and the pious caught the alarm; and the nation wondered why it had ſo long ſuffered irreligion and licentiouſneſs to be openly taught at the publick charge.

Nothing now remained for the poets but to reſiſt or fly. Dryden's conſcience, or his prudence, angry as he was, withheld him from the conflict: Congreve and Vanbrugh attempted anſwers. Congreve,

a very

a very young man, elated with ſucceſs, and impatient of cenſure, aſſumed an air of confidence and ſecurity. His chief art of controverſy is to retort upon his adverſary his own words: he is very angry, and, hoping to conquer Collier with his own weapons, allows himſelf in the uſe of every term of contumely and contempt; but he has the ſword without the arm of Scanderbeg; he has his antagoniſt's coarſeneſs, but not his ſtrength. Collier replied; for conteſt was his delight, he was not to be frighted from his purpoſe or his prey.

The cauſe of Congreve was not tenable; whatever gloſſes he might uſe for the defence or palliation of ſingle paſſages, the general tenour and tendency of his plays muſt always be condemned. It is acknowledged, with univerſal conviction, that the peruſal of his works will make no man better; and that their ultimate effect is to repreſent pleaſure in alliance with vice, and to relax thoſe obligations by which life ought to be regulated,

The ſtage found other advocates, and the diſpute was protracted through ten years: but at laſt Comedy grew more modeſt; and Collier lived to ſee the reformation of the theatre.

Of the powers by which this important victory was atchieved, a quotation from *Love for Love*, and the remark upon it, may afford a ſpecimen:

Sir Sampſ. "Sampſon's a very good name; for "your Sampſons were ſtrong dogs from the beginning."

Angel. "Have a care—If you remember, the "ſtrongeſt Sampſon of your name pull'd an old "houſe over his head at laſt."

"Here you have the Sacred Hiftory burlefqued; "and Sampfon once more brought into the houfe "of Dagon, to make fport for the Philiftines!"

Congreve's laft play was *The Way of the World*; which, though as he hints in his dedication it was written with great labour and much thought, was received with fo little favour, that, being in a high degree offended and difgufted, he refolved to commit his quiet and his fame no more to the caprices of an audience.

From this time his life ceafed to be publick; he lived for himfelf and his friends; and among his friends was able to name every man of his time whom wit and elegance had raifed to reputation. It may be therefore reafonably fuppofed that his manners were polite, and his converfation pleafing.

He feems not to have taken much pleafure in writing, as he contributed nothing to the *Spectator*, and only one paper to the *Tatler*, though publifhed by men with whom he might be fuppofed willing to affociate; and though he lived many years after the publication of his Mifcellaneous Poems, yet he added nothing to them, but lived on in literary indolence; engaged in no controverfy, contending with no rival, neither foliciting flattery by publick commendations, nor provoking enmity by malignant criticifm, but paffing his time among the great and fplendid, in the placid enjoyment of his fame and fortune.

Having owed his fortune to Halifax, he continued always of his patron's party, but, as it feems, without violence or acrimony; and his firmnefs was naturally efteemed, as his abilities were reverenced. His fecurity therefore was never violated; and when, upon

the extrufion of the Whigs, fome interceffion was ufed left Congreve fhould be difplaced, the earl of Oxford made this anfwer:

> " Non obtufa adeo geftamus pectora Pœni,
> " Nec tam averfus equos Tyriâ fol jungit ab urbe."

He that was thus honoured by the adverfe party might naturally expect to be advanced when his friends returned to power, and he was accordingly made fecretary for the ifland of Jamaica; a place, I fuppofe, without truft or care, but which, with his poft in the cuftoms, is faid to have afforded him twelve hundred pounds a year.

His honours were yet far greater than his profits. Every writer mentioned him with refpect; and, among other teftimonies to his merit, Steele made him the patron of his Mifcellany, and Pope infcribed to him his tranflation of the Iliad.

But he treated the Mufes with ingratitude; for, having long converfed familiarly with the great, he wifhed to be confidered rather as a man of fafhion than of wit; and, when he received a vifit from Voltaire, difgufted him by the defpicable foppery of defiring to be confidered not as an author but a gentleman; to which the Frenchman replied, " that, " if he had been only a gentleman, he fhould not " have come to vifit him."

In his retirement he may be fuppofed to have applied himfelf to books; for he difcovers more literature than the poets have commonly attained. But his ftudies were in his latter days obftructed by cataracts in his eyes, which at laft terminated in blindnefs. This melancholy ftate was aggravated by the gout,

gout, for which he ſought relief by a journey to Bath; but, being overturned in his chariot, complained from that time of a pain in his ſide, and died, at his houſe in Surrey-ſtreet in the Strand, Jan. 29, 1728-9. Having lain in ſtate in the Jeruſalem-chamber, he was buried in Weſtminſter-abbey, where a monument is erected to his memory by Henrietta dutcheſs of Marlborough, to whom, for reaſons either not known or not mentioned, he bequeathed a legacy of about ten thouſand pounds; the accumulation of attentive parſimony, which, though to her ſuperfluous and uſeleſs, might have given great aſſiſtance to the ancient family from which he deſcended, at that time by the imprudence of his relation reduced to difficulties and diſtreſs.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CONGREVE has merit of the higheſt kind; he is an original writer, who borrowed neither the models of his plot nor the manner of his dialogue. Of his plays I cannot ſpeak diſtinctly; for ſince I inſpected them many years have paſſed; but what remains upon my memory is, that his characters are commonly factitious and artificial, with very little of nature, and not much of life. He formed a peculiar idea of comick excellence, which he ſuppoſed to conſiſt in gay remarks and unexpected anſwers; but that which he endeavoured, he ſeldom failed of performing. His ſcenes exhibit not much of humour, imagery, or paſſion: his perſonages are a kind of intellectual gladiators; every ſentence is to ward or ſtrike; the conteſt of ſmartneſs is never intermitted; his wit is a meteor playing to and fro with alternate coruſcations. His comedies have therefore, in ſome degree, the operation of tragedies; they ſurpriſe rather than divert, and raiſe admiration oftener than merriment. But they are the works of a mind replete with images, and quick in combination.

Of his miſcellaneous poetry I cannot ſay any thing very favourable. The powers of Congreve ſeem to deſert him when he leaves the ſtage, as Antæus was no longer ſtrong than when he could touch the ground. It cannot be obſerved without wonder, that a mind ſo vigorous and fertile in dramatick compoſitions ſhould on any other occaſion diſcover nothing but impotence and poverty. He has in theſe little

pieces

pieces neither elevation of fancy, ſelection of language, nor ſkill in verſification: yet, if I were required to ſelect from the whole maſs of Engliſh poetry the moſt poetical paragraph, I know not what I could prefer to an exclamation in *The Mourning Bride*:

ALMERIA.

It was a fancy'd noiſe; for all is huſh'd.

LEONORA.

It bore the accent of a human voice.

ALMERIA.

It was thy fear, or elſe ſome tranſient wind
Whiſtling thro' hollows of this vaulted iſle:
We'll liſten—

LEONORA.

Hark!

ALMERIA.

No, all is huſh'd and ſtill as death.—'Tis dreadful!
How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whoſe ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch'd and ponderous roof,
By its own weight made ſtedfaſt and immoveable,
Looking tranquillity! It ſtrikes an awe
And terror on my aching ſight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And ſhoot a chilneſs to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
Nay, quickly ſpeak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

He who reads theſe lines enjoys for a moment the powers of a poet; he feels what he remembers to have felt before; but he feels it with great increaſe

of ſenſibility; he recognizes a familiar image, but meets it again amplified and expanded, embelliſhed with beauty, and enlarged with majeſty.

Yet could the author, who appears here to have enjoyed the confidence of Nature, lament the death of queen Mary in lines like theſe:

The rocks are cleft, and new-deſcending rills
Furrow the brows of all th' impending hills.
The water-gods to floods their rivulets turn,
And each, with ſtreaming eyes, ſupplies his wanting urn.
The Fauns forſake the woods, the Nymphs the grove,
And round the plain in ſad diſtractions rove:
In prickly brakes their tender limbs they tear,
And leave on thorns their locks of golden hair.
With their ſharp nails, themſelves the Satyrs wound,
And tug their ſhaggy beards, and bite with grief the ground.
Lo Pan himſelf, beneath a blaſted oak,
Dejected lies, his pipe in pieces broke.
See Pales weeping too, in wild deſpair,
And to the piercing winds her boſom bare.
And ſee yon fading myrtle, where appears
The Queen of Love, all bath'd in flowing tears;
See how ſhe wrings her hands, and beats her breaſt,
And tears her uſeleſs girdle from her waiſt:
Hear the ſad murmurs of her ſighing doves!
For grief they ſigh, forgetful of their loves.

And, many years after, he gave no proof that time had improved his wiſdom or his wit; for, on the death of the marquis of Blandford, this was his ſong:

And now the winds, which had ſo long been ſtill,
Began the ſwelling air with ſighs to fill;

The water-nymphs, who motionleſs remain'd,
Like images of ice, while ſhe complain'd,
Now loos'd their ſtreams; as when deſcending rains
Roll the ſteep torrents headlong o'er the plains.
The prone creation who ſo long had gaz'd,
Charm'd with her cries, and at her griefs amaz'd,
Began to roar and howl with horrid yell,
Diſmal to hear, and terrible to tell!
Nothing but groans and ſighs were heard around,
And Echo multiplied each mournful ſound.

In both theſe funeral poems, when he has *yelled* out many *ſyllables* of ſenſeleſs *dolour*, he diſmiſſes his reader with ſenſeleſs conſolation: from the grave of Paſtora riſes a light that forms a ſtar; and where Amaryllis wept for Amyntas, from every tear ſprung up a violet.

But William is his hero, and of William he will ſing:

The hovering winds on downy wings ſhall wait around,
And catch, and waft to foreign lands, the flying ſound.

It cannot but be proper to ſhew what they ſhall have to catch and carry:

'Twas now, when flowery lawns the proſpect made,
And flowing brooks beneath a foreſt ſhade,
A lowing heifer, lovelieſt of the herd,
Stood feeding by; while two fierce bulls prepar'd
Their armed heads for fight, by fate of war to prove
The victor worthy of the fair-one's love;
Unthought preſage of what met next my view;
For ſoon the ſhady ſcene withdrew.
And now, for woods, and fields, and ſpringing flowers,
Behold a town ariſe, bulwark'd with walls and lofty towers;

Two rival armies all the plain o'erſpread,
Each in battalia rang'd, and ſhining arms array'd;
With eager eyes beholding both from far,
Namur, the prize and miſtreſs of the war.

The *Birth of the Muſe* is a miſerable fiction. One good line it has, which was borrowed from Dryden. The concluding verſes are theſe:

This ſaid, no more remain'd. Th' etherial hoſt
Again impatient crowd the cryſtal coaſt.
The father, now, within his ſpacious hands,
Encompaſs'd all the mingled maſs of ſeas and lands;
And, having heav'd aloft the ponderous ſphere,
He launch'd the world to float in ambient air.

Of his irregular poems, that to Mrs. Arabella Hunt ſeems to be the beſt: his ode for St. Cecilia's Day, however, has ſome lines which Pope had in his mind when he wrote his own.

His imitations of Horace are feebly paraphraſtical, and the additions which he makes are of little value. He ſometimes retains what were more properly omitted, as when he talks of *vervain* and *gums* to propitiate Venus.

Of his Tranſlations, the ſatire of Juvenal was written very early, and may therefore be forgiven, though it had not the maſſineſs and vigour of the original. In all his verſions ſtrength and ſprightlineſs are wanting: his Hymn to Venus, from Homer, is perhaps the beſt. His lines are weakened with expletives, and his rhymes are frequently imperfect.

His petty poems are ſeldom worth the coſt of criticiſm; ſometimes the thoughts are falſe, and ſometimes common. In his verſes on lady Gethin, the

latter

latter part is in imitation of Dryden's ode on Mrs. Killigrew; and Doris, that has been ſo laviſhly flattered by Steele, has indeed ſome lively ſtanzas, but the expreſſion might be mended; and the moſt ſtriking part of the character had been already ſhewn in *Love for Love*. His *Art of Pleaſing* is founded on a vulgar, but perhaps impracticable principle, and the ſtaleneſs of the ſenſe is not concealed by any novelty of illuſtration or elegance of diction.

This tiſſue of poetry, from which he ſeems to have hoped a laſting name, is totally neglected and known only as it appended to his plays.

While comedy or while tragedy is regarded, his plays are likely to be read; but, except what relates to the ſtage, I know not that he has ever written a ſtanza that is ſung, or a couplet that is quoted. The general character of his Miſcellanies is, that they ſhew little wit, and little virtue.

Yet to him it muſt be confeſſed, that we are indebted for the correction of a national error, and for the cure of our Pindarick madneſs. He firſt taught the Engliſh writers that Pindar's odes were regular; and though certainly he had not the fire requiſite for the higher ſpecies of lyrick poetry, he has ſhewn us, that enthuſiaſm has its rules, and that in mere confuſion there is neither grace nor greatneſs.

BLACKMORE.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE is one of thofe men whofe writings have attracted much notice, but of whofe life and manners very little has been communicated, and whofe lot it has been to be much oftener mentioned by enemies than by friends.

He was the fon of Robert Blackmore of Corfham in Wiltfhire, ftyled by Wood *Gentleman*, and fuppofed to have been an attorney; having been for fome time educated in a country-fchool, he was fent at thirteen to Weftminfter; and in 1668 was entered at Edmund-Hall in Oxford, where he took the degree of M. A. June 3, 1676, and refided thirteen years; a much longer time than it is ufual to fpend at the univerfity; and which he feems to have paffed with very little attention to the bufinefs of the place; for, in his poems, the ancient names of nations or places, which he often introduces, are pronounced by chance. He afterwards traveled: at Padua he was made doctor of phyfick; and, after having wandered about a year and a half on the Continent, returned home.

In

In ſome part of his life, it is not known when, his indigence compelled him to teach a ſchool, an humiliation with which, though it certainly laſted but a little while, his enemies did not forget to reproach him, when he became conſpicuous enough to excite malevolence; and let it be remembered for his honour, that to have been once a ſchoolmaſter is the only reproach which all the perſpicacity of malice, animated by wit, has ever fixed upon his private life.

When he firſt engaged in the ſtudy of phyſick, he enquired, as he ſays, of Dr. Sydenham, what authors he ſhould read, and was directed by Sydenham to Don Quixote; "which," ſaid he, "is a very "good book; I read it ſtill." The perverſeneſs of mankind makes it often miſchievous in men of eminence to give way to merriment; the idle and the illiterate will long ſhelter themſelves under this fooliſh apophthegm.

Whether he reſted ſatisfied with this direction, or ſought for better, he commenced phyſician, and obtained high eminence and extenſive practice. He became Fellow of the College of Phyſicians, April 12, 1687, being one of the thirty which, by the new charter of king James, were added to the former Fellows. His reſidence was in Cheapſide *, and his friends were chiefly in the city. In the early part of Blackmore's time, a citizen was a term of reproach; and his place of abode was another topick to which his adverſaries had recourſe, in the penury of ſcandal.

* At Sadlers Hall.

Blackmore, therefore, was made a poet not by neceſſity but inclination, and wrote not for a livelihood but for fame; or, if he may tell his own motives, for a nobler purpoſe, to engage poetry in the cauſe of Virtue.

I believe it is peculiar to him, that his firſt publick work was an heroick poem. He was not known as a maker of verſes till he publiſhed (in 1695) *Prince Arthur*, in ten books, written, as he relates, "by ſuch catches and ſtarts, and in ſuch occaſional "uncertain hours as his profeſſion afforded, and for "the greateſt part in coffee-houſes, or in paſſing up "and down the ſtreets." For the latter part of this apology he was accuſed of writing "to the rumbling "of his chariot-wheels." He had read, he ſays, "but little poetry throughout his whole life; and "for fifteen years before had not written an hundred "verſes, except one copy of Latin verſes in praiſe "of a friend's book."

He thinks, and with ſome reaſon, that from ſuch a performance perfection cannot be expected; but he finds another reaſon for the ſeverity of his cenſurers, which he expreſſes in language ſuch as Cheapſide eaſily furniſhed. "I am not free of the Poets "Company, having never kiſſed the governor's hands: "mine is therefore not ſo much as a permiſſion-poem, "but a downright interloper. Thoſe gentlemen, "who carry on their poetical trade in a joint ſtock, "would certainly do what they could to ſink and "ruin an unlicenſed adventurer, notwithſtanding I "diſturbed none of their factories, nor imported any "goods they have ever dealt in." He had lived in the city till he had learned its note.

That

That *Prince Arthur* found many readers is certain; for in two years it had three editions; a very uncommon inſtance of favourable reception, at a time when literary curioſity was yet confined to particular claſſes of the nation. Such ſucceſs naturally raiſed animoſity; and Dennis attacked it by a formal criticiſm, more tedious and diſguſting than the work which he condemns. To this cenſure may be oppoſed the approbation of Locke and the admiration of Molineux, which are found in their printed Letters. Molineux is particularly delighted with the ſong of *Mopas*, which is therefore ſubjoined to this narrative.

It is remarked by Pope, that what "raiſes the "hero, often ſinks the man." Of Blackmore it may be ſaid, that, as the poet ſinks, the man riſes; the animadverſions of Dennis, inſolent and contemptuous as they were, raiſed in him no implacable reſentment: he and his critick were afterwards friends; and in one of his latter works he praiſes Dennis as "equal to Boileau in poetry, and ſuperior to him in "critical abilities."

He ſeems to have been more delighted with praiſe than pained by cenſure, and, inſtead of ſlackening, quickened his career. Having in two years produced ten books of *Prince Arthur*, in two years more (1697) he ſent into the world *King Arthur* in twelve. The provocation was now doubled, and the reſentment of wits and criticks may be ſuppoſed to have increaſed in proportion. He found, however, advantages more than equivalent to all their outrages; he was this year made one of the phyſicians in ordinary to king William, and advanced by him to

the honour of knighthood, with the prefent of a gold chain and medal.

The malignity of the wits attributed his knighthood to his new poem; but king William was not very ftudious of poetry; and Blackmore perhaps had other merit, for he fays, in his Dedication to *Alfred*, that "he had a greater part in the fucceffion of the "houfe of Hanover than ever he had boafted."

What Blackmore could contribute to the Succeffion, or what he imagined himfelf to have contributed, cannot now be known. That he had been of confiderable ufe, I doubt not but he believed, for I hold him to have been very honeft; but he might eafily make a falfe eftimate of his own importance: thofe whom their virtue reftrains from deceiving others, are often difpofed by their vanity to deceive themfelves. Whether he promoted the Succeffion or not, he at leaft approved it, and adhered invariably to his principles and party through his whole life.

His ardour of poetry ftill continued; and not long after (1700) he publifhed a *Paraphrafe on the Book of Job*, and other parts of the Scripture. This performance Dryden, who purfued him with great malignity, lived long enough to ridicule in a Prologue.

The wits eafily confederated againft him, as Dryden, whofe favour they almoft all courted, was his profeffed adverfary. He had befides given them reafon for refentment, as, in his Preface to *Prince Arthur*, he had faid of the Dramatick Writers almoft all that was alleged afterwards by Collier; but Blackmore's cenfure was cold and general, Collier's

was

was perſonal and ardent; Blackmore taught his reader to diſlike what Collier incited him to abhor.

In his Preface to *King Arthur* he endeavoured to gain at leaſt one friend, and propitiated Congreve by higher praiſe of his *Mourning Bride*, than it has obtained from any other critick.

The ſame year he publiſhed a *Satire on Wit*; a proclamation of defiance which united the poets almoſt all againſt him, and which brought upon him lampoons and ridicule from every ſide. This he doubtleſs foreſaw, and evidently deſpiſed; nor ſhould his dignity of mind be without its praiſe, had he not paid the homage to greatneſs which he denied to genius, and degraded himſelf by conferring that authority over the national taſte, which he takes from the poets, upon men of high rank and wide influence, but of leſs wit and not greater virtue.

Here is again diſcovered the inhabitant of Cheapſide, whoſe head cannot keep his poetry unmingled with trade. To hinder that intellectual bankruptcy which he affects to fear, he will erect a *Bank for Wit*.

In this poem he juſtly cenſured Dryden's impurities, but praiſed his powers; though in a ſubſequent edition he retained the ſatire, and omitted the praiſe. What was his reaſon, I know not; Dryden was then no longer in his way.

His head ſtill teemed with heroick poetry; and (1705) he publiſhed *Eliza*, in ten books. I am afraid that the world was now weary of contending about Blackmore's heroes; for I do not remember that by any author, ſerious or comical, I have found *Eliza* either praiſed or blamed. She "dropped," as it

ſeems,

ſeems, "dead-born from the preſs." It is never mentioned, and was never ſeen by me till I borrowed it for the preſent occaſion. Jacob ſays, "it is corrected and reviſed for another impreſſion;" but the labour of reviſion was thrown away.

From this time he turned ſome of his thoughts to the celebration of living characters; and wrote a poem on the *Kit-cat Club*, and *Advice to the Poets how to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough*; but on occaſion of another year of ſucceſs, thinking himſelf qualified to give more inſtruction, he again wrote a poem of *Advice to a Weaver of Tapeſtry*. Steele was then publiſhing the *Tatler*; and, looking round him for ſomething at which he might laugh, unluckily lighted on Sir Richard's work, and treated it with ſuch contempt, that, as Fenton obſerves, he put an end to the ſpecies of writers that gave *Advice to Painters*.

Not long after (1712) he publiſhed *Creation, a philoſophical Poem*, which has been, by my recommendation, inſerted in the late collection. Whoever judges of this by any other of Blackmore's performances, will do it injury. The praiſe given it by Addiſon (*Spec.* 339) is too well known to be tranſcribed; but ſome notice is due to the teſtimony of Dennis, who calls it a "philoſophical Poem, which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its verſification, and infinitely ſurpaſſed it in the ſolidity and ſtrength of its reaſoning."

Why an author ſurpaſſes himſelf, it is natural to enquire. I have heard from Mr. Draper, an eminent bookſeller, an account received by him from Ambroſe Philips, "That Blackmore, as he proceeded in this poem, laid his manuſcript from time to

"time

"time before a club of wits with whom he asso-"ciated; and that every man contributed, as he "could, either improvement or correction; so that," said Philips, "there are perhaps no where in the book "thirty lines together that now stand as they were "originally written."

The relation of Philips, I suppose, was true; but when all reasonable, all credible allowance is made for this friendly revision, the author will still retain an ample dividend of praise; for to him must always be assigned the plan of the work, the distribution of its parts, the choice of topicks, the train of argument, and, what is yet more, the general predominance of philosophical judgement and poetical spirit. Correction seldom effects more than the suppression of faults: a happy line, or a single elegance, may perhaps be added; but of a large work the general character must always remain; the original constitution can be very little helped by local remedies; inherent and radical dullness will never be much invigorated by extrinsick animation.

This poem, if he had written nothing else, would have transmitted him to posterity among the first favourites of the English Muse; but to make verses was his transcendent pleasure, and, as he was not deterred by censure, he was not satiated with praise.

He deviated, however, sometimes into other tracks of literature, and condescended to entertain his readers with plain prose. When the *Spectator* stopped, he considered the polite world as destitute of entertainment; and, in concert with Mr. Hughes, who wrote every third paper, published three times a week the *Lay Monastery*, founded on the supposition that some

 literary

literary men, whose characters are described, had retired to a house in the country to enjoy philosophical leisure, and resolved to instruct the publick, by communicating their disquisitions and amusements. Whether any real persons were concealed under fictitious names, is not known. The hero of the club is one Mr. Johnson; such a constellation of excellence, that his character shall not be suppressed, though there is no great genius in the design, nor skill in the delineation.

"The first I shall name is Mr. Johnson, a gentle-"man that owes to Nature excellent faculties and an "elevated genius, and to industry and application "many acquired accomplishments. His taste is dis-"tinguishing, just, and delicate: his judgement "clear, and his reason strong, accompanied with an "imagination full of spirit, of great compass, and "stored with refined ideas. He is a critick of the "first rank; and, what is his peculiar ornament, he "is delivered from the ostentation, malevolence, and "supercilious temper, that so often blemish men of "that character. His remarks result from the na-"ture and reason of things, and are formed by a "judgement free, and unbiassed by the authority of "those who have lazily followed each other in the "same beaten track of thinking, and are arrived "only at the reputation of acute grammarians and "commentators; men, who have been copying one "another many hundred years, without any improve-"ment; or, if they have ventured farther, have only "applied in a mechanical manner the rules of ancient "criticks to modern writings, and with great labour "discovered nothing but their own want of judge-

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"ment and capacity. As Mr. Johnſon penetrates to "the bottom of his ſubject, by which means his ob- "ſervations are ſolid and natural, as well as delicate, "ſo his deſign is always to bring to light ſomething "uſeful and ornamental; whence his character is the "reverſe to theirs, who have eminent abilities in "inſignificant knowledge, and a great felicity in "finding out trifles. He is no leſs induſtrious to "ſearch out the merit of an author, than ſagacious "in diſcerning his errors and defects; and takes "more pleaſure in commending the beauties, than "expoſing the blemiſhes of a laudable writing: like "Horace, in a long work, he can bear ſome defor- "mities, and juſtly lay them on the imperfection of "human nature, which is incapable of faultleſs pro- "ductions. When an excellent *Drama* appears in "publick, and by its intrinſick worth attracts a ge- "neral applauſe, he is not ſtung with envy and ſpleen; "nor does he expreſs a ſavage nature, in faſtening "upon the celebrated author, dwelling upon his "imaginary defects, and paſſing over his conſpicuous "excellences. He treats all writers upon the ſame "impartial foot; and is not, like the little criticks, "taken up entirely in finding out only the beauties "of the ancient, and nothing but the errors of the "modern writers. Never did any one expreſs more "kindneſs and good-nature to young and unfiniſhed "authors; he promotes their intereſts, protects their "reputation, extenuates their faults, and ſets off their "virtues, and by his candour guards them from "the ſeverity of his judgement. He is not like "thoſe dry criticks, who are moroſe becauſe they "cannot write themſelves, but is himſelf maſter

"of a good vein in poetry; and though he does "not often employ it, yet he has sometimes en- "tertained his friends with his unpublished perform- "ances."

The rest of the *Lay Monks* seem to be but feeble mortals, in comparison with the gigantic Johnson; who yet, with all his abilities, and the help of the fraternity, could drive the publication but to forty papers, which were afterwards collected into a volume, and called in the title *A Sequel to the Spectators*.

Some years afterwards (1716 and 1717) he published two volumes of Essays in prose, which can be commended only as they are written for the highest and noblest purpose, the promotion of religion. Blackmore's prose is not the prose of a poet; for it is languid, sluggish, and lifeless; his diction is neither daring nor exact, his flow neither rapid nor easy, and his periods neither smooth nor strong. His account of *Wit* will shew with how little clearness he is content to think, and how little his thoughts are recommended by his language.

"As to its efficient cause, *Wit* owes its production "to an extraordinary and peculiar temperament in "the constitution of the possessor of it, in which is "found a concurrence of regular and exalted fer- "ments, and an affluence of animal spirits, refined "and rectified to a great degree of purity; whence, "being endowed with vivacity, brightness, and ce- "lerity, as well in their reflections as direct mo- "tions, they become proper instruments for the "sprightly operations of the mind; by which means

" the imagination can with great facility range the " wide field of Nature, contemplate an infinite va- " riety of objects, and, by obſerving the ſimilitude " and diſagreement of their ſeveral qualities, ſingle " out and abſtract, and then ſuit and unite, thoſe " ideas which will beſt ſerve its purpoſe. Hence " beautiful alluſions, ſurpriſing metaphors, and ad- " mirable ſentiments, are always ready at hand: and " while the fancy is full of images, collected from in- " numerable objects and their different qualities, re- " lations, and habitudes, it can at pleaſure dreſs a " common notion in a ſtrange but becoming garb; " by which, as before obſerved, the ſame thought " will appear a new one, to the great delight and " wonder of the hearer. What we call *genius* reſults " from this particular happy complexion in the firſt " formation of the perſon that enjoys it, and is Na- " ture's gift, but diverſified by various ſpecifick cha- " racters and limitations, as its active fire is blended " and allayed by different proportions of phlegm, " or reduced and regulated by the contraſt of oppo- " ſite ferments. Therefore, as there happens in the " compoſition of facetious genius a greater or leſs, " though ſtill an inferior, degree of judgement and " prudence, one man of wit will be varied and diſtin- " guiſhed from another."

In theſe Eſſays he took little care to propitiate the wits; for he ſcorns to avert their malice at the expence of virtue or of truth.

" Several, in their books, have many ſarcaſtical " and ſpiteful ſtrokes at religion in general; while " others make themſelves pleaſant with the principles " of

"of the Chriſtian. Of the laſt kind, this age has "ſeen a moſt audacious example in the book intitled *A Tale of a Tub*. Had this writing been publiſhed in a Pagan or Popiſh nation, who are juſtly "impatient of all indignity offered to the eſtabliſhed "religion of their country, no doubt but the author "would have received the puniſhment he deſerved. "But the fate of this impious buffoon is very different; for in a Proteſtant kingdom, zealous of "their civil and religious immunities, he has not "only eſcaped affronts and the effects of publick reſentment, but has been careſſed and patronized by "perſons of great figure, and of all denominations. "Violent party-men, who differed in all things beſides, agreed in their turn to ſhew particular reſpect and friendſhip to this inſolent derider of the "worſhip of his country, till at laſt the reputed writer is not only gone off with impunity, but triumphs "in his dignity and preferment. I do not know "that any inquiry or ſearch was ever made after this writing, or that any reward was ever offered for the "diſcovery of the author, or that the infamous book "was ever condemned to be burnt in publick: whether this proceeds from the exceſſive eſteem and "love that men in power, during the late reign, "had for wit, or their defect of zeal and concern "for the Chriſtian religion, will be determined beſt "by thoſe who are beſt acquainted with their character."

In another place he ſpeaks with becoming abhorrence of a *godleſs author*, who has burleſqued a Pſalm. This author was ſuppoſed to be Pope, who publiſhed a reward for any one that would produce the coiner of

of the accuſation, but never denied it; and was afterwards the perpetual and inceſſant enemy of Blackmore.

One of his Eſſays is upon the Spleen, which is treated by him ſo much to his own ſatisfaction, that he has publiſhed the ſame thoughts in the ſame words; firſt in the *Lay Monaſtery*; then in the Eſſay; and then in the Preface to a Medical Treatiſe on the Spleen. One paſſage, which I have found already twice, I will here exhibit, becauſe I think it better imagined, and better expreſſed, than could be expected from the common tenour of his proſe:

"—As the ſeveral combinations of ſplenetick "madneſs and folly produce an infinite variety of "irregular underſtanding, ſo the amicable accommo- "dation and alliance between ſeveral virtues and vices "produce an equal diverſity in the diſpoſitions and "manners of mankind; whence it comes to paſs, "that as many monſtrous and abſurd productions are "found in the moral as in the intellectual world. "How ſurpriſing is it to obſerve, among the leaſt "culpable men, ſome whoſe minds are attracted by "Heaven and Earth with a ſeeming equal force; "ſome who are proud of humility: others who are "cenſorious and uncharitable, yet ſelf-denying and "devout; ſome who join contempt of the world "with ſordid avarice; and others who preſerve a "great degree of piety, with ill-nature and ungo- "verned paſſions! Nor are inſtances of this inconſiſtent "mixture leſs frequent among bad men, where we "often, with admiration, ſee perſons at once generous "and unjuſt, impious lovers of their country, and "flagitious heroes, good-natured ſharpers, immoral

" men of honour, and libertines who will fooner die " than change their religion; and though it is true " that repugnant coalitions of fo high a degree are " found but in a part of mankind, yet none of the " whole mafs, either good or bad, are entirely ex- " empted from fome abfurd mixture."

He about this time (Aug. 22, 1716) became one of the *Elects* of the College of Phyficians; and was foon after (Oct. 1.) chofen *Cenfor*. He feems to have arrived late, whatever was the reafon, at his medical honours.

Having fucceeded fo well in his book on *Creation*, by which he eftablifhed the great principle of all Religion, he thought his undertaking imperfect, unlefs he likewife enforced the truth of Revelation; and for that purpofe added another poem on *Redemption*. He had likewife written, before his *Creation*, three books on the *Nature of Man*.

The lovers of mufical devotion have always wifhed for a more happy metrical verfion than they have yet obtained of the book of Pfalms: this wifh the piety of Blackmore led him to gratify; and he produced (1721) *A new Verfion of the* Pfalms *of* David, *fitted to the Tunes ufed in Churches*; which, being recommended by the archbifhops and many bifhops, obtained a licence for its admiffion into publick worfhip; but no admiffion has it yet obtained, nor has it any right to come where Brady and Tate have got poffeffion. Blackmore's name muft be added to thofe of many others, who, by the fame attempt, have obtained only the praife of meaning well.

He was not yet deterred from heroick poetry. There was another monarch of this ifland, (for he did

not

not fetch his heroes from foreign countries), whom he confidered as worthy the Epick Mufe, and he dignified Alfred (1723) with twelve books. But the opinion of the nation was now fettled; a hero introduced by Blackmore was not likely to find either refpect or kindnefs; *Alfred* took his place by *Eliza* in filence and darknefs: Benevolence was afhamed to favour, and Malice was weary of infulting. Of his four Epick Poems, the firft had fuch reputation and popularity as enraged the criticks; the fecond was at leaft known enough to be ridiculed; the two laft had neither friends nor enemies.

Contempt is a kind of gangrene, which, if it feizes one part of a character, corrupts all the reft by degrees. Blackmore, being defpifed as a poet, was in time neglected as a phyfician; his practice, which was once invidioufly great, forfook him in the latter part of his life; but being by nature, or by principle, averfe from idlenefs, he employed his unwelcome leifure in writing books on phyfick, and teaching others to cure thofe whom he could himfelf cure no longer. I know not whether I can enumerate all the treatifes by which he has endeavoured to diffufe the art of healing; for there is fcarcely any diftemper, of dreadful name, which he has not taught the reader how to oppofe. He has written on the fmall-pox, with a vehement invective againft inoculation; on confumptions, the fpleen, the gout, the rheumatifm, the king's-evil, the dropfy, the jaundice, the ftone, the diabetes, and the plague.

Of thofe books, if I had read them, it could not be expected that I fhould be able to give a critical account. I have been told that there is fomething in

them

them of vexation and difcontent, difcovered by a perpetual attempt to degrade phyfick from its fublimity, and to reprefent it as attainable without much previous or concomitant learning. By the tranfient glances which I have thrown upon them, I have obferved an affected contempt of the Ancients, and a fupercilious derifion of tranfmitted knowledge. Of this indecent arrogance the following quotation from his Preface to the Treatife on the Small-pox will afford a fpecimen; in which, when the reader finds, what I fear is true, that, when he was cenfuring Hippocrates, he did not know the difference between *aphorifm* and *apophthegm*, he will not pay much regard to his determinations concerning ancient learning.

" As for this book of Aphorifms, it is like my " lord Bacon's of the fame title, a book of jefts, " or a grave collection of trite and trifling obferva- " tions; of which, though many are true and " certain, yet they fignify nothing, and may afford " diverfion, but no inftruction; moft of them being " much inferior to the fayings of the wife men of " Greece, which yet are fo low and mean, that we " are entertained every day with more valuable fenti- " ments at the table converfation of ingenious and " learned men."

I am unwilling, however, to leave him in total difgrace, and will therefore quote from another Preface a paffage lefs reprehenfible.

" Some gentlemen have been difingenuous and " unjuft to me, by wrefting and forcing my meaning, " in the Preface to another book, as if I condemned " and expofed all learning, though they knew I de- " clared

"clared that I greatly honoured and esteemed all "men of superior literature and erudition; and that "I only undervalued false or superficial learning, that "signifies nothing for the service of mankind; and "that as to physick, I expressly affirmed that learn-"ing must be joined with native genius to make a "physician of the first rank; but if those talents are "separated, I asserted, and do still insist, that a "man of native sagacity and diligence will prove a "more able and useful practiser, than a heavy no-"tional scholar, encumbered with a heap of confused "ideas."

He was not only a poet and a physician, but produced likewise a work of a different kind, *A true and impartial History of the Conspiracy against King* William, *of glorious Memory, in the Year* 1695. This I have never seen, but suppose it at least compiled with integrity. He engaged likewise in theological controversy, and wrote two books against the Arians; *Just Prejudices against the* Arian *Hypothesis*; and *Modern* Arians *unmasked.* Another of his works is *Natural Theology, or Moral Duties considered apart from Positive; with some Observations on the Desirableness and Necessity of a supernatural Revelation.* This was the last book that he published. He left behind him *The accomplished Preacher, or an Essay upon Divine Eloquence*; which was printed after his death by Mr. White of Nayland in Essex, the minister who attended his death-bed, and testified the fervent piety of his last hours. He died on the eighth of October, 1729.

BLACKMORE, by the unremitted enmity of the wits, whom he provoked more by his virtue than his dulneſs, has been expoſed to worſe treatment than he deſerved; his name was ſo long uſed to point every epigram upon dull writers, that it became at laſt a bye-word of contempt: but it deſerves obſervation, that malignity takes hold only of his writings, and that his life paſſed without reproach, even when his boldneſs of reprehenſion naturally turned upon him many eyes deſirous to eſpy faults, which many tongues would have made haſte to publiſh. But thoſe who could not blame could at leaſt forbear to praiſe, and therefore of his private life and domeſtick character there are no memorials.

As an author he may juſtly claim the honours of magnanimity. The inceſſant attacks of his enemies, whether ſerious or merry, are never diſcovered to have diſturbed his quiet, or to have leſſened his confidence in himſelf: they neither awed him to ſilence nor to caution; they neither provoked him to petulance, nor depreſſed him to complaint. While the diſtributors of literary fame were endeavouring to depreciate and degrade him, he either deſpiſed or defied them, wrote on as he had written before, and never turned aſide to quiet them by civility, or repreſs them by confutation.

He depended with great ſecurity on his own powers, and perhaps was for that reaſon leſs diligent in peruſing books. His literature was, I think, but ſmall. What he knew of antiquity, I ſuſpect him to have gathered from modern compilers: but, though he could not boaſt of much critical knowledge, his mind

was ſtored with general principles, and he left minute reſearches to thoſe whom he conſidered as little minds.

With this diſpoſition he wrote moſt of his poems. Having formed a magnificent deſign, he was careleſs of particular and ſubordinate elegances; he ſtudied no niceties of verſification; he waited for no felicities of fancy; but caught his firſt thoughts in his firſt words in which they were preſented: nor does it appear that he ſaw beyond his own performances, or had ever elevated his ideas to that ideal perfection which every genius born to excel is condemned always to purſue, and never overtake. In the firſt ſuggeſtions of his imagination he acquieſced; he thought them good, and did not ſeek for better. His works may be read a long time without the occurrence of a ſingle line that ſtands prominent from the reſt.

The poem on *Creation* has, however, the appearance of more circumſpection; it wants neither harmony of numbers, accuracy of thought, nor elegance of diction: it has either been written with great care, or, what cannot be imagined of ſo long a work, with ſuch felicity as made care leſs neceſſary.

Its two conſtituent parts are ratiocination and deſcription. To reaſon in verſe, is allowed to be difficult; but Blackmore not only reaſons in verſe, but very often reaſons poetically; and finds the art of uniting ornament with ſtrength, and eaſe with cloſeneſs. This is a ſkill which Pope might have condeſcended to learn from him, when he needed it ſo much in his Moral Eſſays.

In his deſcriptions both of life and nature, the poet and the philoſopher happily co-operate; truth is recommended

recommended by elegance, and elegance ſuſtained by truth.

In the ſtructure and order of the poem, not only the greater parts are properly conſecutive, but the didactick and illuſtrative paragraphs are ſo happily mingled, that labour is relieved by pleaſure, and the attention is led on through a long ſucceſſion of varied excellence to the original poſition, the fundamental principle of wiſdom and of virtue.

AS the heroick poems of Blackmore are now little read, it is thought proper to insert, as a specimen from *Prince Arthur*, the song of *Mopas* mentioned by Molineux.

But that which Arthur with most pleasure heard
Were noble strains, by Mopas sung the bard,
Who to his harp in lofty verse began,
And through the secret maze of Nature ran.
He the Great Spirit sung, that all things fill'd,
That the tumultuous waves of Chaos still'd;
Whose nod dispos'd the jarring seeds to peace,
And made the wars of hostile Atoms cease.
All Beings, we in fruitful Nature find,
Proceeded from the Great Eternal Mind;
Streams of his unexhausted spring of power,
And, cherish'd with his influence, endure.
He spread the pure cerulean fields on high,
And arch'd the chambers of the vaulted sky,
Which he, to suit their glory with their height,
Adorn'd with globes, that reel, as drunk with light.
His hand directed all the tuneful spheres,
He turn'd their orbs, and polish'd all the stars.
He fill'd the Sun's vast lamp with golden light,
And bid the silver Moon adorn the night.
He spread the airy Ocean without shores,
Where birds are wafted with their feather'd oars.
Then sung the bard how the light vapours rise
From the warm earth, and cloud the smiling skies,
He sung how some, chill'd in their airy flight,
Fall scatter'd down in pearly dew by night;
How some, rais'd higher, sit in secret steams
On the reflected points of bounding beams,
Till, chill'd with cold, they shade th' etherial plain,
Then on the thirsty earth descend in rain;

How

How ſome, whoſe parts a ſlight contexture ſhow,
Sink hovering through the air, in fleecy ſnow;
How part is ſpun in ſilken threads, and clings
Entangled in the graſs in glewy ſtrings;
How others ſtamp to ſtones, with ruſhing ſound
Fall from their cryſtal quarries to the ground;
How ſome are laid in trains, that kindled fly,
In harmleſs fires by night, about the ſky;
How ſome in winds blow with impetuous force,
And carry ruin where they bend their courſe,
While ſome conſpire to form a gentle breeze,
To fan the air, and play among the trees;
How ſome, enrag'd, grow turbulent and loud,
Pent in the bowels of a frowning cloud,
That cracks, as if the axis of the world
Was broke, and Heaven's bright towers were downwards
hurl'd.
He ſung how earth's wide ball, at Jove's command,
Did in the midſt on airy columns ſtand;
And how the ſoul of plants, in priſon held,
And bound with ſluggiſh fetters, lies conceal'd,
Till with the ſpring's warm beams, almoſt releas'd
From the dull weight, with which it lay oppreſt,
Its vigour ſpreads, and makes the teeming earth
Heave up, and labour with the ſprouting birth:
The active ſpirit freedom ſeeks in vain,
It only works and twiſts a ſtronger chain;
Urging its priſon's ſides to break a way,
It makes that wider, where 'tis forc'd to ſtay
Till, having form'd its living houſe, it rears
Its head, and in a tender plant appears.
Hence ſprings the oak, the beauty of the grove,
Whoſe ſtately trunk fierce ſtorms can ſcarcely move,
Hence grows the cedar, hence the ſwelling vine
Does round the elm its purple cluſters twine.
Hence painted flowers the ſmiling gardens bleſs,
Both with their fragrant ſcent and gaudy dreſs.

Hence

Hence the white lily in full beauty grows,
Hence the blue violet, and bluſhing roſe.
He ſung how ſun-beams brood upon the earth,
And in the glebe hatch ſuch a numerous birth;
Which way the genial warmth in Summer ſtorms
Turns putrid vapours to a bed of worms;
How rain, transform'd by this prolifick power,
Falls from the clouds an animated ſhower.
He ſung the embryo's growth within the womb,
And how the parts their various ſhapes aſſume.
With what rare art the wonderous ſtructure's wrought,
From one crude maſs to ſuch perfection brought;
That no part uſeleſs, none miſplac'd we ſee,
None are forgot, and more would monſtrous be."

F E N T O N.

THE brevity with which I am to write the account of ELIJAH FENTON, is not the effect of indifference or negligence. I have sought intelligence among his relations in his native country, but have not obtained it.

He was born near Newcastle in Staffordshire, of an ancient family *, whose estate was very considerable; but

* He was born at Shelton, near Newcastle, May 20, 1683; and was the youngest of eleven children of John Fenton, an attorney at law, and one of the coroners for the county of Stafford. His father died in 1694; and his grave, in the church-yard of Stoke upon Trent, is distinguished by the following elegant Latin inscription from the pen of his son;

H. S. E.
JOANNES FENTON
de Shelton
antiquâ stirpe generosus;
juxta reliquias conjugis
CATHARINÆ
formâ, moribus, pietate,
optimo viro dignissimæ:
Qui
intemeratâ in ecclesiam fide,
et virtutibus intaminatis enituit;

necnon

but he was the youngeſt of twelve children, and being therefore neceſſarily deſtined to ſome lucrative employment was ſent firſt to ſchool, and afterwards to Cambridge *, but, with many other wiſe and virtuous men, who at that time of diſcord and debate conſulted conſcience, whether well or ill informed, more than intereſt, he doubted the legality of the government, and refuſing to qualify himſelf for publick employment by the oaths required, left the univerſity without a degree; but I never heard that the enthuſiaſm of oppoſition impelled him to ſeparation from the Church.

By this perverſeneſs of integrity he was driven out a commoner of Nature, excluded from the regular modes of profit and proſperity, and reduced to pick up a livelihood uncertain and fortuitous; but it muſt be remembered that he kept his name unſullied, and never ſuffered himſelf to be reduced, like too many of the ſame ſect, to mean arts and diſhonourable ſhifts. Whoever mentioned Fenton, mentioned him with honour.

necnon ingenii lepore
bonis artibus expoliti,
ac animo erga omnes benevolo,
ſibi ſuiſque jucundus vixit.
Decem annos uxori dilectæ ſuperſtes
magnum ſui deſiderium bonis
omnibus reliquit,
Anno { Salutis humanæ 1694,
ætatis ſuæ 56.

See Gent. Mag. 1791, vol. LXI. p. 703. N.

* He was entered of Jeſus College, and took a Bachelor's degree in 1704; but it appears by the liſt of Cambridge graduates that he removed in 1726 to Trinity Hall. N.

The life that paffes in penury muft neceffarily pafs in obfcurity. It is impoffible to trace Fenton from year to year, or to difcover what means he ufed for his fupport. He was a while fecretary to Charles earl of Orrery in Flanders, and tutor to his young fon, who afterwards mentioned him with great efteem and tendernefs. He was at one time affiftant in the fchool of Mr. Bonwicke in Surrey; and at another kept a fchool for himfelf at Sevenoaks in Kent, which he brought into reputation; but was perfuaded to leave it (1710) by Mr St. John, with promifes of a more honourable employment.

His opinions, as he was a Nonjuror, feem not to have been remarkably rigid. He wrote with great zeal and affection the praifes of queen Anne, and very willingly and liberally extolled the duke of Marlborough, when he was (1707) at the height of his glory.

He expreffed ftill more attention to Marlborough and his family by an elegiack Paftoral on the marquis of Blandford, which could be prompted only by refpect or kindnefs; for neither the duke nor dutchefs defired the praife, or liked the coft of patronage.

The elegance of his poetry entitled him to the company of the wits of his time, and the amiablenefs of his manners made him loved wherever he was known. Of his friendfhip to Southern and Pope there are lafting monuments.

He publifhed in 1707 a collection of poems.

By pope he was once placed in a ftation that might have been of great advantage. Craggs, when he was advanced to be fecretary of ftate (about 1720),

feel-

feeling his want of literature, desired Pope to procure him an instructor, by whose help he might supply the deficiencies of his education. Pope recommended Fenton, in whom Craggs found all that he was seeking. There was now a prospect of ease and plenty, for Fenton had merit, and Craggs had generosity: but the small-pox suddenly put an end to the pleasing expectation.

When Pope, after the great success of his *Iliad*, undertook the *Odyssey*, being, as it seems, weary of translating, he determined to engage auxiliaries. Twelve books he took to himself, and twelve he distributed between Broome and Fenton: the books allotted to Fenton were the first, the fourth, the nineteenth, and the twentieth. It is observable, that he did not take the eleventh, which he had before translated into blank verse; neither did Pope claim it, but committed it to Broome. How the two associates performed their parts is well known to the readers of poetry, who have never been able to distinguish their books from those of Pope.

In 1723 was performed his tragedy of *Mariamne*; to which Southern, at whose house it was written, is said to have contributed such hints as his theatrical experience supplied. When it was shewn to Cibber, it was rejected by him, with the additional insolence of advising Fenton to engage himself in some employment of honest labour, by which he might obtain that support which he could never hope from his poetry. The play was acted at the other theatre; and the brutal petulance of Cibber was confuted, though, perhaps, not shamed, by general applause. Fenton's profits are said to have amounted to near a

thousand pounds, with which he discharged a debt contracted by his attendance at court.

Fenton seems to have had some peculiar system of versification. *Mariamne* is written in lines of ten syllables, with few of those redundant terminations which the drama not only admits but requires, as more nearly approaching to real dialogue. The tenor of his verse is so uniform that it cannot be thought casual; and yet upon what principle he so constructed it, is difficult to discover.

The mention of his play brings to my mind a very trifling occurrence. Fenton was one day in the company of Broome his associate, and Ford, a clergyman, at that time too well known, whose abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise. They determined all to see the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which was acted that night; and Fenton, as a dramatick poet, took them to the stage-door; where the door-keeper enquiring who they were, was told that they were three very necessary men, Ford, Broome, and Fenton. The name in the play, which Pope restored to *Brook*, was then *Broome*.

It was perhaps after this play that he undertook to revise the punctuation of Milton's poems, which, as the author neither wrote the original copy nor corrected the press, was supposed capable of amendment. To this edition he prefixed a short and elegant account of Milton's life, written at once with tenderness and integrity.

He published likewise (1729) a very splendid edition of Waller, with notes often useful, often entertaining,

taining, but too much extended by long quotations from Clarendon. Illuſtrations drawn from a book ſo eaſily conſulted, ſhould be made by reference rather than tranſcription.

The latter part of his life was calm and pleaſant. The relict of Sir William Trumbull invited him, by Pope's recommendation, to educate her ſon; whom he firſt inſtructed at home, and then attended to Cambridge. The lady afterwards detained him with her as the auditor of her accounts. He often wandered to London, and amuſed himſelf with the converſation of his friends.

He died in 1730, at Eaſthampſtead in Berkſhire, the ſeat of Lady Trumbull; and Pope, who had been always his friend, honoured him with an epitaph, of which he borrowed the two firſt lines from Craſhaw.

Fenton was tall and bulky, inclined to corpulence, which he did not leſſen by much exerciſe; for he was very ſluggiſh and ſedentary, roſe late, and when he had riſen, ſat down to his book or papers. A woman that once waited on him in a lodging, told him, as ſhe ſaid, that he would "lie a-bed, and be fed with "a ſpoon." This, however, was not the worſt that might have been prognoſticated; for Pope ſays, in his Letters, that "he died of indolence;" but his immediate diſtemper was the gout.

Of his morals and his converſation the account is uniform: he was never named but with praiſe and fondneſs, as a man in the higheſt degree amiable and excellent. Such was the character given him by the earl of Orrery, his pupil; ſuch is the teſtimony of

Pope *; and ſuch were the ſuffrages of all who could boaſt of his acquaintance.

By a former writer of his Life a ſtory is told, which ought not to be forgotten. He uſed, in the latter part of his time, to pay his relations in the country an yearly viſit. At an entertainment made for the family by his elder brother, he obſerved, that one of his ſiſters, who had married unfortunately, was abſent; and found, upon enquiry, that diſtreſs had made her thought unworthy of invitation. As ſhe was at no great diſtance, he refuſed to ſit at the table till ſhe was called, and, when ſhe had taken her place, was careful to ſhew her particular attention.

His collection of poems is now to be conſidered. The ode to the *Sun* is written upon a common plan, without uncommon ſentiments; but its greateſt fault is its length. No poem ſhould be long of which the purpoſe is only to ſtrike the fancy, without enlightening the underſtanding by precept, ratiocination, or narrative. A blaze firſt pleaſes, and then tires the ſight.

Of *Florelio* it is ſufficient to ſay, that it is an occaſional paſtoral, which implies ſomething neither natural nor artificial, neither comick nor ſerious.

The next ode is irregular, and therefore defective. As the ſentiments are pious, they cannot eaſily be new; for what can be added to topicks on which ſucceſſive ages have been employed!

Of the *Paraphraſe on Iſaiah* nothing very favourable can be ſaid. Sublime and ſolemn proſe gains little

* Spence.

by

by a change to blank verſe; and the paraphraſt has deſerted his original, by admitting images not Aſiatick, at leaſt not Judaical:

> —— Returning Peace,
> Dove-eyed, and rob'd in white—

Of his petty poems ſome are very trifling, without any thing to be praiſed either in the thought or expreſſion. He is unlucky in his competition; he tells the ſame idle tale with Congreve, and does not tell it ſo well. He tranſlates from Ovid the ſame epiſtle as Pope; but I am afraid not with equal happineſs.

To examine his performances one by one would be tedious. His tranſlation from Homer into blank verſe will find few readers, while another can be had in rhyme. The piece addreſſed to Lambarde is no diſagreeable ſpecimen of epiſtolary poetry; and his ode to the lord Gower was pronounced by Pope the next ode in the Engliſh language to Dryden's Cecilia. Fenton may be juſtly ſtyled an excellent verſifier and a good poet.

WHAT-

WHATEVER I have ſaid of Fenton is confirmed by Pope in a letter, by which he communicated to Broome an account of his death.

TO

The Rev^{d}. Mr. BROOME.

At PULHAM, near HARLESTONE

NOR

[By BECCLES Bag.] SUFFOLKE

D^{R} SIR,

I Intended to write to you on this melancholy ſubject, the death of Mr. Fenton, before y^{rs} came; but ſtay'd to have informd myſelf & you of ye circumſtances of it. All I hear is, that he felt a Gradual Decay, tho ſo early in Life, & was declining for 5 or 6 months. It was not, as I apprehended, the Gout in his Stomach, but I believe rather a Complication firſt of Groſs Humours, as he was naturally corpulent, not diſcharging themſelves, as he uſed no ſort of Exerciſe. No man better bore ye approaches of his Diſſolution (as I am told) or with leſs oſtentation yielded up his Being. The great Modeſty wch you know was natural to him, and ye great Contempt he had for all Sorts of Vanity & Parade, never appeared more than in his laſt moments: He had a conſcious Satisfaction (no doubt) in acting right, in feeling himſelf honeſt, true, & unpretending to more than was his own. So he dyed, as he lived, with that ſecret, yet ſufficient, Contentment.

As to any Papers left behind him, I dare ſay they can be but few; for this reaſon, He never wrote out of Vanity, or thought much of the Applauſe of Men.

I know

I know an Inſtance where he did his utmoſt to conceal his own merit that way; and if we join to this his natural Love of Eaſe, I fancy we muſt expect little of this ſort: at leaſt I hear of none except ſome few further remarks on Waller (wch his cautious integrity made him leave an order to be given to Mr. Tonſon) and perhaps, tho tis many years ſince I ſaw it, a Tranſlation of ye firſt Book of Oppian. He had begun a Tragedy of Dion, but made ſmall progreſs in it.

As to his other Affairs, he dyed poor, but honeſt, leaving no Debts, or Legacies; except of a few p^{ds} to Mr. Trumbull and my Lady, in token of reſpect, Gratefulneſs, & mutual Eſteem.

I ſhall with pleaſure take upon me to draw this amiable, quiet, deſerving, unpretending Chriſtian and Philoſophical character, in His Epitaph. There Truth may be ſpoken in a few words: as for Flouriſh, & Oratory, & Poetry, I leave them to younger and more lively Writers, ſuch as love writing for writing ſake, & w^{d} rather ſhow their own Fine Parts, y^{n} Report the valuable ones of any other man. So the Elegy I renounce.

I condole with you from my heart, on the loſs of ſo worthy a man, and a Friend to us both. Now he is gone, I muſt tell you he has done you many a good office, & ſet your character in the faireſt light to ſome who either miſtook you, or knew you not. I doubt not he has done the ſame for me.

Adieu: Let us love his Memory, and profit by his example. I am very ſincerely

D^R SIR

Your affectionate

& real Servant

AUG. 29, 1730. A. POPE.

GAY.

THE ... *

G A Y.

JOHN GAY, defcended from an old family that had been long in poffeffion of the manour of * Goldworthy in Devonfhire, was born in 1688, at or near Barnftaple, where he was educated by Mr. Luck, who taught the fchool of that town with good reputation, and, a little before he retired from it, publifhed a volume of Latin and Englifh verfes. Under fuch a mafter he was likely to form a tafte for poetry. Being born without profpect of hereditary riches, he was fent to London in his youth, and placed apprentice with a filk-mercer.

How long he continued behind the counter, or with what degree of foftnefs and dexterity he received and accommodated the Ladies, as he probably took no delight in telling it, is not known. The report is, that he was foon weary of either the reftraint or fervility of his occupation, and eafily perfuaded his mafter to difcharge him.

* *Goldworthy* does not appear in the *Villare*. Dr. J.

The

The dutchefs of Monmouth, remarkable for inflexible perfeverance in her demand to be treated as a princefs, in 1712 took Gay into her fervice as fecretary: by quitting a fhop for fuch fervice he might gain leifure, but he certainly advanced little in the boaft of independence. Of his leifure he made fo good ufe, that he publifhed next year a poem on *Rural Sports*, and infcribed it to Mr. Pope, who was then rifing faft into reputation. Pope was pleafed with the honour; and when he became acquainted with Gay, found fuch attractions in his manners and converfation, that he feems to have received him into his inmoft confidence; and a friendfhip was formed between them which lafted to their feparation by death, without any known abatement on either part. Gay was the general favourite of the whole affociation of wits; but they regarded him as a play-fellow rather than a partner, and treated him with more fondnefs than refpect.

Next year he publifhed *The Shepherd's Week*, fix Englifh paftorals, in which the images are drawn from real life, fuch as it appears among the rufticks in parts of England remote from London. Steele, in fome papers of the *Guardian*, had praifed Ambrofe Philips, as the Paftoral writer that yielded only to Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenfer. Pope who had alfo publifhed paftorals, not pleafed to be overlooked, drew up a comparifon of his own compofitions with thofe of Philips, in which he covertly gave himfelf the preference, while he feemed to difown it. Not content with this, he is fuppofed to have incited Gay to write *The Shepherd's Week*, to fhew, that if it be neceffary to copy nature with minutenefs, rural life

muft

muſt be exhibited ſuch as groſſneſs and ignorance have made it. So far the plan was reaſonable; but the Paſtorals are introduced by a *Proeme*, written with ſuch imitation as they could attain of obſolete language, and by conſequence in a ſtyle that was never ſpoken nor written in any language or in any place.

But the effect of reality and truth became conſpicuous, even when the intention was to ſhew them groveling and degraded. Theſe Paſtorals became popular, and were read with delight as juſt repreſentations of rural manners and occupations, by thoſe who had no intereſt in the rivalry of the poets, nor knowledge of the critical diſpute.

In 1713 he brought a comedy called *The Wife of Bath* upon the ſtage, but it received no applauſe: he printed it, however; and ſeventeen years after, having altered it, and, as he thought, adapted it more to the publick taſte, he offered it again to the town; but, though he was fluſhed with the ſucceſs of the *Beggar's Opera*, had the mortification to ſee it again rejected.

In the laſt year of queen Anne's life, Gay was made ſecretary to the earl of Clarendon, ambaſſador to the court of Hanover. This was a ſtation that naturally gave him hopes of kindneſs from every party; but the queen's death put an end to her favours, and he had dedicated his *Shepherd's Week* to Bolingbroke, which Swift conſidered as the crime that obſtructed all kindneſs from the Houſe of Hanover.

He did not, however, omit to improve the right which his office had given him to the notice of the

royal

royal family. On the arrival of the princess of Wales, he wrote a poem, and obtained so much favour, that both the prince and princess went to see his *What d'ye call it*, a kind of mock-tragedy, in which the images were comick, and the action grave; so that, as Pope relates, Mr. Cromwell, who could not hear what was said, was at a loss how to reconcile the laughter of the audience with the solemnity of the scene.

Of this performance the value certainly is but little; but it was one of the lucky trifles that give pleasure by novelty, and was so much favoured by the audience, that envy appeared against it in the form of criticism; and Griffin, a player, in conjunction with Mr. Theobald, a man afterwards more remarkable, produced a pamphlet called *The Key to the What d'ye call it*; which, says Gay, "calls me "a blockhead, and Mr. Pope a knave."

But Fortune has always been inconstant. Not long afterwards (1717) he endeavoured to entertain the town with *Three Hours after Marriage*; a comedy written, as there is sufficient reason for believing, by the joint assistance of Pope and Arbuthnot. One purpose of it was to bring into contempt Dr. Woodward the Fossilist, a man not really or justly contemptible. It had the fate which such outrages deserve: the scene in which Woodward was directly and apparently ridiculed, by the introduction of a mummy and a crocodile, disgusted the audience, and the performance was driven off the stage with general condemnation.

Gay is represented as a man easily incited to hope, and deeply depressed when his hopes were disap-

pointed. This is not the character of a hero; but it may naturally imply something more generally welcome, a soft and civil companion. Whoever is apt to hope good from others is diligent to please them; but he that believes his powers strong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to please himself.

He had been simple enough to imagine that those who laughed at the *What d'ye call it* would raise the fortune of its author; and, finding nothing done, sunk into dejection. His friends endeavoured to divert him. The earl of Burlington sent him (1716) into Devonshire; the year after, Mr. Pulteney took him to Aix; and in the following year lord Harcourt invited him to his seat, where, during his visit, two rural lovers were killed with lightening, as is particularly told in Pope's Letters.

Being now generally known, he published (1720) his Poems by subscription with such success, that he raised a thousand pounds; and called his friends to a consultation, what use might be best made of it. Lewis, the steward of lord Oxford, advised him to intrust it to the funds, and live upon the interest; Arbuthnot bade him to intrust it to Providence, and live upon the principal; Pope directed him, and was seconded by Swift, to purchase an annuity.

Gay in that disastrous year * had a present from young Craggs of some South-sea stock, and once supposed himself to be master of twenty thousand pounds. His friends persuaded him to sell his share; but he dreamed of dignity and splendour, and could not bear to obstruct his own fortune. He was then

* Spence.

impor-

importuned to ſell as much as would purchaſe an hundred a year for life, "which," ſays Fenton, "will make you ſure of a clean ſhirt and a ſhoulder "of mutton every day." This counſel was rejected: the profit and principal were loſt, and Gay ſunk under the calamity ſo low that his life became in danger.

By the care of his friends, among whom Pope appears to have ſhewn particular tenderneſs, his health was reſtored; and, returning to his ſtudies, he wrote a tragedy called *The Captives*, which he was invited to read before the princeſs of Wales. When the hour came, he ſaw the princeſs and her ladies all in expectation, and advancing with reverence, too great for any other attention, ſtumbled at a ſtool, and falling forwards threw down a weighty Japan ſcreen. The princeſs ſtarted, the ladies ſcreamed, and poor Gay, after all the diſturbance, was ſtill to read his play.

The fate of *The Captives*, which was acted at Drury-Lane in 1723-4, I know not *; but he now thought himſelf in favour, and undertook (1726) to write a volume of Fables for the improvement of the young duke of Cumberland. For this he is ſaid to have been promiſed a reward, which he had doubtleſs magnified with all the wild expectations of indigence and vanity.

Next year the prince and princeſs became king and queen, and Gay was to be great and happy; but on the ſettlement of the houſehold he found himſelf

* It was acted ſeven nights. The Author's third night was by command of their Royal Highneſſes. R.

appointed gentleman uſher to the princeſs Louiſa. By this offer he thought himſelf inſulted, and ſent a meſſage to the queen, that he was too old for the place. There ſeem to have been many machinations employed afterwards in his favour; and diligent court was paid to Mrs. Howard, afterwards counteſs of Suffolk, who was much beloved by the king and queen, to engage her intereſt for his promotion; but ſolicitations, verſes, and flatteries, were thrown away; the lady heard them, and did nothing.

All the pain which he ſuffered from neglect, or, as he perhaps termed it, the ingratitude of the court, may be ſuppoſed to have been driven away by the unexampled ſucceſs of the *Beggar's Opera*. This play, written in ridicule of the muſical Italian Drama, was firſt offered to Cibber and his brethren at Drury-Lane, and rejected; it being then carried to Rich, had the effect, as was ludicrouſly ſaid, of *making* Gay *rich*, and Rich *gay*.

Of this lucky piece, as the reader cannot but wiſh to know the original and progreſs, I have inſerted the relation which Spence has given in Pope's words.

"Dr. Swift had been obſerving once to Mr. Gay, "what an odd pretty ſort of a thing a Newgate Paſto-"ral might make. Gay was inclined to try at ſuch "a thing for ſome time; but afterwards thought it "would be better to write a comedy on the ſame "plan. This was what gave riſe to the *Beggar's* "*Opera*. He began on it; and when firſt he men-"tioned it to Swift, the Doctor did not much like "the project. As he carried it on, he ſhewed what "he wrote to both of us, and we now and then "gave a correction, or a word or two of advice;

"but

"but it was wholly of his own writing. —When it "was done, neither of us thought it would ſucceed. "We ſhewed it to Congreve; who, after reading it "over, ſaid, it would either take greatly, or be "damned confoundedly.—We were all, at the firſt "night of it, in great uncertainty of the event; till "we were very much encouraged by overhearing "the duke of Argyle, who ſat in the next box to us, "ſay, 'It will do—it muſt do! I ſee it in the eyes "of them.' This was a good while before the firſt "act was over, and ſo gave us eaſe ſoon; for that "duke (beſides his own good taſte) has a particular "knack, as any one now living, in diſcovering the "taſte of the publick. He was quite right in this, "as uſual; the good-nature of the audience appear-"ed ſtronger and ſtronger every act, and ended in a "clamour of applauſe."

Its reception is thus recorded in the notes to the *Dunciad*:

"This piece was received with greater applauſe "than was ever known. Beſides being acted in "London ſixty-three days without interruption, and "renewed the next ſeaſon with equal applauſe, it "ſpread into all the great towns of England; was "played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth "time; at Bath and Briſtol fifty, &c. It made its "progreſs into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where "it was performed twenty-four days ſucceſſively. "The ladies carried about with them the favourite "ſongs of it in fans, and houſes were furniſhed "with it in ſcreens. The fame of it was not con-"fined to the author only. The perſon who acted

 "Polly,

"Polly, till then obſcure, became all at once the fa-
"vourite of the town; her pictures were engraved,
"and ſold in great numbers; her Life written, books
"of letters and verſes to her publiſhed, and pam-
"phlets made even of her ſayings and jeſts. Fur-
"thermore, it drove out of England (for that ſea-
"ſon) the Italian Opera, which had carried all before
"it for ten years."

Of this performance, when it was printed, the reception was different, according to the different opinion of its readers. Swift commended it for the excellence of its morality, as a piece that "placed "all kinds of vice in the ſtrongeſt and moſt odious "light;" but others, and among them Dr. Herring, afterwards archbiſhop of Canterbury, cenſured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero, and diſmiſſing him at laſt unpuniſhed. It has been even ſaid, that, after the exhibition of the *Beggar's Opera*, the gangs of robbers were evidently multiplied.

Both theſe deciſions are ſurely exaggerated. The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpoſe, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more ſpeculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil. Highwaymen and houſe-breakers ſeldom frequent the play-houſe, or mingle in any elegant diverſion; nor is it poſſible for any one to imagine that he may rob with ſafety, becauſe he ſees Macheath reprieved upon the ſtage.

This

This objection however, or ſome other rather political than moral, obtained ſuch prevalence, that when Gay produced a ſecond part under the name of *Polly*, it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain; and he was forced to recompenſe his repulſe by a ſubſcription, which is ſaid to have been ſo liberally beſtowed, that what he called oppreſſion ended in profit. The * publication was ſo much favoured, that though the firſt part gained him four hundred pounds, near thrice as much was the profit of the ſecond.

He received yet another recompence for this ſuppoſed hardſhip, in the affectionate attention of the duke and dutcheſs of Queenſberry, into whoſe houſe he was taken, and with whom he paſſed the remaining part of his life. The * duke, conſidering his want of œconomy, undertook the management of his money, and gave it to him as he wanted it. But it is ſuppoſed that the diſcountenance of the Court ſunk deep into his heart, and gave him more diſcontent than the applauſes or tenderneſs of his friends could overpower. He ſoon fell into his old diſtemper, an habitual colick, and languiſhed, though with many intervals of eaſe and chearfulneſs, till a violent fit at laſt ſeized him, and carried him to the grave, as Arbuthnot reported, with more precipitance than he had ever known. He died on the fourth of December, 1732, and was buried in Weſtminſter Abbey. The letter, which brought an account of his death to Swift, was laid by for ſome days unopened, becauſe when he received it he was impreſt with the preconception of ſome misfortune.

* Spence.

After his death, was publiſhed a ſecond volume of Fables, more political than the former. His opera of *Achilles* was acted, and the profits were given to two widow ſiſters, who inherited what he left, as his lawful heirs; for he died without a will, though he had gathered * three thouſand pounds. There have appeared likewiſe under his name a comedy called the *Diſtreſt Wiſe*, and the *Rehearſal at Gotham*, a piece of humour.

The character given him by Pope * is this, that "he was a natural man, without deſign, who ſpoke "what he thought, and juſt as he thought it;" and that "he was of a timid temper, and fearful of giving "offence to the great;" which caution however, ſays Pope, was of no avail.

As a poet, he cannot be rated very high. He was, as I once heard a female critick remark, "of a "lower order." He had not in any great degree the *mens divinior*, the dignity of genius. Much however muſt be allowed to the author of a new ſpecies of compoſition, though it be not of the higheſt kind. We owe to Gay the Ballad Opera; a mode of comedy which at firſt was ſuppoſed to delight only by its novelty, but has now by the experience of half a century been found ſo well accommodated to the diſpoſition of a popular audience, that it is likely to keep long poſſeſſion of the ſtage. Whether this new drama was the product of judgement or of luck, the praiſe of it muſt be given to the inventor; and there are many writers read with more reverence, to

* Spence.

whom

whom ſuch merit or originality cannot be attributed.

His firſt performance, the *Rural Sports*, is ſuch as was eaſily planned and executed; it is never contemptible, nor ever excellent. The *Fan* is one of thoſe mythological fictions which antiquity delivers ready to the hand, but which, like other things that lie open to every one's uſe, are of little value. The attention naturally retires from a new tale of Venus, Diana, and Minerva.

His Fables ſeem to have been a favourite work; for, having publiſhed one volume, he left another behind him. Of this kind of Fables, the author does not appear to have formed any diſtinct or ſettled notion. Phædrus evidently confounds them with *Tales*, and Gay both with *Tales* and *Allegorical Proſopopœias*. A *Fable*, or *Apologue*, ſuch as is now under conſideration, ſeems to be, in its genuine ſtate, a narrative in which beings irrational, and ſometimes inanimate, *arbores loquuntur, non tantum feræ*, are, for the purpoſe of moral inſtruction, feigned to act and ſpeak with human intereſts and paſſions. To this deſcription the compoſitions of Gay do not always conform. For a Fable he gives now and then a Tale, or an abſtracted Allegory; and from ſome, by whatever name they may be called, it will be difficult to extract any moral principle. They are, however, told with livelineſs; the verſification is ſmooth; and the diction, though now-and-then a little conſtrained by the meaſure or the rhyme, is generally happy.

To *Trivia* may be allowed all that it claims; it is ſprightly, various, and pleaſant. The ſubject is of that kind which Gay was by nature qualified to adorn; yet ſome of his decorations may be juſtly wiſhed away. An honeſt blackſmith might have done for Patty what is performed by Vulcan. The appearance of Cloacina is nauſeous and ſuperfluous; a ſhoe-boy could have been produced by the caſual cohabitation of mere mortals. Horace's rule is broken in both caſes; there is no *dignus vindice nodus*, no difficulty that required any ſupernatural interpoſition. A patten may be made by the hammer of a mortal; and a baſtard may be dropped by a human ſtrumpet. On great occaſions, and on ſmall, the mind is repelled by uſeleſs and apparent falſehood.

Of his little Poems the publick judgement ſeems to be right; they are neither much eſteemed, nor totally deſpiſed. The ſtory of the Apparition is borrowed from one of the tales of Poggio. Thoſe that pleaſe leaſt are the pieces to which *Gulliver* gave occaſion; for who can much delight in the echo of an unnatural fiction?

Dione is a counterpart to *Amynta*, and *Paſtor Fido*, and other trifles of the ſame kind, eaſily imitated, and unworthy of imitation. What the Italians call comedies from a happy concluſion, Gay calls a tragedy from a mournful event; but the ſtyle of the Italians and of Gay is equally tragical. There is ſomething in the poetical *Arcadia* ſo remote from known reality and ſpeculative poſſibility, that we can never ſupport its repreſentation through a long work. A Paſtoral of an hundred lines may be endured; but

who

who will hear of ſheep and goats, and myrtle bowers and purling rivulets, through five acts? Such ſcenes pleaſe Barbarians in the dawn of literature, and children in the dawn of life; but will be for the moſt part thrown away, as men grow wiſe, and nations grow learned.

GRANVILLE.

OF GEORGE GRANVILLE, or, as others write, *Gr enville*, or *Grenville*, afterwards lord Landſdown of Bideford in the county of Devon, leſs is known than his name and high rank might give reaſon to expect. He was born about 1667, the ſon of Bernard Greenville, who was entruſted by Monk with the moſt private tranſactions of the Reſtoration, and the grandſon of Sir Bevil Greenville, who died in the King's cauſe, at the battle of Landſdowne.

His early education was ſuperintended by Sir William Ellis; and his progreſs was ſuch, that before the age of twelve he was ſent to Cambridge*, where he pronounced a copy of his own verſes to the princeſs Mary d'Eſté of Modena, then dutcheſs of York, when ſhe viſited the univerſity.

* To Trinity College. By the univerſity regiſter it appears that he was admitted to his Maſter's Degree in 1679: we muſt, therefore, ſet the year of his birth ſome years back. H.

At the acceffion of king James, being now at eighteen, he again exerted his poetical powers, and addreffed the new monarch in three fhort pieces, of which the firft is profane, and the two others fuch as a boy might be expected to produce; but he was commended by old Waller, who perhaps was pleafed to find himfelf imitated in fix lines, which, though they begin with nonfenfe and end with dulnefs, excited in the young author a rapture of acknowledgement,

In numbers fuch as Waller's felf might ufe.

It was probably about this time that he wrote the poem to the earl of Peterborough, upon his *accomplifhment* of the duke of York's marriage with the princefs of Modena, whofe charms appear to have gained a ftrong prevalence over his imagination, and upon whom nothing ever has been charged but imprudent piety, an intemperate and mifguided zeal for the propagation of Popery.

However faithful Granville might have been to the King, or however enamoured of the Queen, he has left no reafon for fuppofing that he approved either the artifices or the violence with which the King's religion was infinuated or obtruded. He endeavoured to be true at once to the King and to the Church.

Of this regulated loyalty he has tranfmitted to pofterity a fufficient proof, in the letter which he wrote to his father about a month before the prince of Orange landed.

"Mar,

" Mar, near Doncaſter, Oct. 6, 1688.]
" To the honourable Mr. Barnard Granville, at the
" earl of Bathe's, St. James's.

" SIR,

" Your having no proſpect of obtaining a com-
" miſſion for me, can no way alter or cool my deſire
" at this important juncture to venture my life, in
" ſome manner or other, for my King and my
" Country.

" I cannot bear living under the reproach of lying
" obſcure and idle in a country retirement, when
" every man who has the leaſt ſenſe of honour ſhould
" be preparing for the field.

" You may remember, Sir, with what reluctance
" I ſubmitted to your commands upon Monmouth's
" rebellion, when no importunity could prevail with
" you to permit me to leave the Academy: I was
" too young to be hazarded; but, give me leave to
" ſay, it is glorious at any age to die for one's coun-
" try, and the ſooner the nobler the ſacrifice.

" I am now older by three years. My uncle Bathe
" was not ſo old when he was left among the ſlain at
" the battle of Newbury; nor you yourſelf, Sir,
" when you made your eſcape from your tutor's, to
" join your brother at the defence of Scilly.

" The ſame cauſe has now come round about again.
" The King has been miſled; let thoſe who have
" miſled him be anſwerable for it. Nobody can deny
" but he is ſacred in his own perſon; and it is every
" honeſt man's duty to defend it.

" You are pleaſed to ſay, it is yet doubtful if the
" Hollanders are raſh enough to make ſuch an at-
" tempt; but, be that as it will, I beg leave to in-
" ſiſt

" ſiſt upon it, that I may be preſented to his Ma-" jeſty, as one whoſe utmoſt ambition is to devote his " life to his ſervice, and my country's, after the ex-" ample of all my anceſtors.

" The gentry aſſembled at York, to agree upon " the choice of repreſentatives for the county, have " prepared an addreſs, to aſſure his Majeſty they are " ready to ſacrifice their lives and fortunes for him " upon this and all other occaſions; but at the ſame " time they humbly beſeech him to give them ſuch " magiſtrates as may be agreeable to the laws of the " land; for, at preſent, there is no authority to " which they can legally ſubmit.

" They have been beating up for volunteers at York, " and the towns adjacent, to ſupply the regiments " at Hull; but nobody will liſt.

" By what I can hear, every body wiſhes well " to the King; but they would be glad his miniſters " were hanged.

" The winds continue ſo contrary, that no landing " can be ſo ſoon as was apprehended; therefore I may " hope, with your leave and aſſiſtance, to be in readi-" neſs before any action can begin. I beſeech you, " Sir, moſt humbly and moſt earneſtly, to add this " one act of indulgence more to ſo many other teſti-" monies which I have conſtantly received of your " goodneſs; and be pleaſed to believe me always, " with the utmoſt duty and ſubmiſſion, Sir,

" Your moſt dutiful ſon,

" and moſt obedient ſervant,

" Geo. Granville."

Through

Through the whole reign of king William he is ſuppoſed to have lived in literary retirement, and indeed had for ſome time few other pleaſures but thoſe of ſtudy in his power. He was, as the biographers obſerve, the younger ſon of a younger brother; a denomination by which our anceſtors proverbially expreſſed the loweſt ſtate of penury and dependence. He is ſaid, however, to have preſerved himſelf at this time from diſgrace and difficulties by œconomy, which he forgot or neglected in life more advanced, and in better fortune.

About this time he became enamoured of the counteſs of Newburgh, whom he has celebrated with ſo much ardour by the name of Mira. He wrote verſes to her before he was three-and-twenty, and may be forgiven if he regarded the face more than the mind. Poets are ſometimes in too much haſte to praiſe.

In the time of his retirement it is probable that he compoſed his dramatick pieces, the *She-Gallants* (acted 1696), which he reviſed, and called *Once a Lover, and always a Lover*; *The Jew of Venice*, altered from Shakſpeare's *Merchant of Venice* (1698); *Heroick Love*, a tragedy (1701); *The Britiſh Enchanters* (1706), a dramatick poem; and *Peleus and Thetis*, a maſque, written to accompany *The Jew of Venice*.

The comedies, which he has not printed in his own edition of his works, I never ſaw; *Once a Lover, and always a Lover*, is ſaid to be in a great degree indecent and groſs. Granville could not admire without bigotry; he copied the wrong as well as the right from his maſters, and may be ſuppoſed to have learned

learned obſcenity from Wycherley, as he learned mythology from Waller.

In his *Jew of Venice*, as Rowe remarks, the character of *Shylock* is made comick, and we are prompted to laughter inſtead of deteſtation.

It is evident that *Heroick Love* was written, and preſented on the ſtage, before the death of Dryden. It is a mythological tragedy, upon the love of Agamemnon and Chryſeis and therefore eaſily ſunk into neglect, though praiſed in verſe by Dryden, and in proſe by Pope.

It is concluded by the wiſe Ulyſſes with this ſpeech:

> Fate holds the ſtrings, and men like children move
> But as they 're led; ſucceſs is from above.

At the acceſſion of queen Anne, having his fortune improved by bequeſts from his father, and his uncle the earl of Bath, he was choſen in Parliament for Fowey. He ſoon after engaged in a joint tranſlation of the *Invectives againſt Philip*, with a deſign, ſurely weak and puerile, of turning the thunder of Demoſthenes upon the head of Lewis.

He afterwards (in 1706) had his eſtate again augmented by an inheritance from his elder brother, Sir Bevil Granville, who, as he returned from the government of Barbadoes, died at ſea. He continued to ſerve in parliament; and in the ninth year of queen Anne was choſen knight of the ſhire for Cornwall.

At the memorable change of the miniſtry (1710), he was made ſecretary at war, in the place of Mr. Robert Walpole.

Next year, when the violence of party made twelve peers in a day, Mr. Granville became *Lord Lanſdown Baron Bideford*, by a promotion juſtly remarked to be not invidious, becauſe he was the heir of a family in which two peerages, that of the earl of Bath and lord Granville of Potheridge, had lately become extinct. Being now in the Queen's favour, he (1712) was appointed comptroller of the houſehold, and a privy counſellor; and to his other honours was added the dedication of Pope's *Windſor Foreſt*. He was advanced next year to be treaſurer of the houſehold.

Of theſe favours he ſoon loſt all but his title; for at the acceſſion of king George his place was given to the earl Cholmondeley, and he was perſecuted with the reſt of his party. Having proteſted againſt the bill for attainting Ormond and Bolingbroke, he was, after the inſurrection in Scotland, ſeized Sept. 26, 1715, as a ſuſpected man, and confined in the Tower till Feb. 8, 1717, when he was at laſt releaſed, and reſtored to his ſeat in parliament; where (1719) he made a very ardent and animated ſpeech againſt the repeal of the Bill to prevent Occaſional Conformity, which, however, though it was then printed, he has not inſerted into his works.

Some time afterwards (about 1722), being perhaps embarraſſed by his profuſion, he went into foreign countries, with the uſual pretence of recovering his health. In this ſtate of leiſure and retirement, he received the firſt volume of Burnet's hiſtory, of which he

he cannot be ſuppoſed to have approved the general tendency, and where he thought himſelf able to detect ſome particular falſehoods. He therefore undertook the vindication of general Monk from ſome calumnies of Dr. Burnet, and ſome miſrepreſentations of Mr. Echard. This was anſwered civilly by Mr. Thomas Burnet and Oldmixon; and more roughly by Dr. Colbatch.

His other hiſtorical performance is a defence of his relation Sir Richard Greenville, whom lord Clarendon has ſhewn in a form very unamiable. So much is urged in this apology to juſtify many actions that have been repreſented as culpable, and to palliate the reſt, that the reader is reconciled for the greater part; and it is made very probable that Clarendon was by perſonal enmity diſpoſed to think the worſt of Greenville, as Greenville was alſo very willing to think the worſt of Clarendon. Theſe pieces were publiſhed at his return to England.

Being now deſirous to conclude his labours, and enjoy his reputation, he publiſhed (1732) a very beautiful and ſplendid edition of his works, in which he omitted what he diſapproved, and enlarged what ſeemed deficient.

He now went to Court, and was kindly received by queen Caroline; to whom and to the princeſs Anne he preſented his works, with verſes on the blank leaves, with which he concluded his poetical labours.

He died in Hanover-ſquare, Jan. 30, 1735, having a few days before buried his wife, the lady Anne Villiers, widow to Mr. Thynne, by whom he had four daughters, but no ſon.

Writers commonly derive their reputation from their works; but there are works which owe their reputation to the character of the writer. The publick ſometimes has its favourites, whom it rewards for one ſpecies of excellence with the honours due to another. From him whom we reverence for his beneficence we do not willingly withhold the praiſe of genius; a man of exalted merit becomes at once an accompliſhed writer, as a beauty finds no great difficulty in paſſing for a wit.

Granville was a man illuſtrious by his birth, and therefore attracted notice; ſince he is by Pope ſtyled "the polite," he muſt be ſuppoſed elegant in his manners, and generally loved; he was in times of conteſt and turbulence ſteady to his party, and obtained that eſteem which is always conferred upon firmneſs and conſiſtency. With thoſe advantages, having learned the art of verſifying, he declared himſelf a poet; and his claim to the laurel was allowed.

But by a critick of a later generation, who takes up his book without any favourable prejudices, the praiſe already received will be thought ſufficient; for his works do not ſhew him to have had much comprehenſion from nature, or illumination from learning. He ſeems to have had no ambition above the imitation of Waller, of whom he has copied the faults, and very little more. He is for ever amuſing himſelf with the puerilities of mythology; his King is Jupiter, who, if the Queen brings no children, has a barren Juno. The Queen is compounded of Juno, Venus, and Minerva. His poem on the dutcheſs of Grafton's law-ſuit, after having rattled a while

while with Juno and Pallas, Mars and Alcides, Caſſiope, Niobe, and the Propetides, Hercules, Minos, and Rhadamanthus, at laſt concludes its folly with profaneneſs.

His verſes to Mira, which are moſt frequently mentioned, have little in them of either art or nature, of the ſentiments of a lover, or the language of a poet: there may be found, now and then, a happier effort; but they are commonly feeble and unaffecting, or forced and extravagant.

His little pieces are ſeldom either ſprightly or elegant, either keen or weighty. They are trifles written by idleneſs, and publiſhed by vanity. But his Prologues and Epilogues have a juſt claim to praiſe.

The *Progreſs of Beauty* ſeems one of his moſt elaborate pieces, and is not deficient in ſplendour and gaiety; but the merit of original thought is wanting. Its higheſt praiſe is the ſpirit with which he celebrates king James's conſort, when ſhe was a queen no longer.

The *Eſſay on unnatural Flights in Poetry* is not inelegant nor injudicious, and has ſomething of vigour beyond moſt of his other performances: his precepts are juſt, and his cautions proper; they are indeed not new, but in a didactic poem novelty is to be expected only in the ornaments and illuſtrations. His poetical precepts are accompanied with agreeable and inſtructive notes.

The Maſque of *Peleus and Thetis* has here and there a pretty line: but it is not always melodious, and the concluſion is wretched.

In his *Britiſh Enchanters* he has bidden defiance to all chronology, by confounding the inconſiſtent manners of different ages: but the dialogue has often the

air of Dryden's rhyming plays; and his ſongs are lively, though not very correct. This is, I think, far the beſt of his works; for, if it has many faults, it has likewiſe paſſages which are at leaſt pretty, though they do not riſe to any high degree of excellence.

YALDEN.

THOMAS YALDEN, the fixth fon of Mr. John Yalden, of Suffex, was born in the city of Exeter in 1671. Having been educated in the grammar-fchool belonging to Magdalen College in Oxford, he was in 1690, at the age of nineteen, admitted commoner of Magdalen Hall, under the tuition of *Jofiah Pullen*, a man whofe name is ftill remembered in the univerfity. He became next year one of the fcholars of Magdalen College, where he was diftinguifhed by a lucky accident.

It was his turn, one day, to pronounce a declamation; and Dr. Hough, the prefident, happening to attend, thought the compofition too good to be the fpeaker's. Some time after, the doctor finding him a little irregularly bufy in the library, fet him an exercife for punifhment; and, that he might not be deceived by any artifice, locked the door. Yalden, as it happened, had been lately reading on the fubject given, and produced with little difficulty a compofition which fo pleafed the prefident, that he

told him his former ſuſpicions, and promiſed to favour him.

Among his contemporaries in the college were Addiſon and Sacheverell, men who were in thoſe times friends, and who both adopted Yalden to their intimacy. Yalden continued, throughout his life, to think as probably he thought at firſt, yet did not forfeit the friendſhip of Addiſon.

When Namur was taken by king William, Yalden made an ode. There never was any reign more celebrated by the poets than that of William, who had very little regard for ſong himſelf, but happened to employ miniſters who pleaſed themſelves with the praiſe of patronage.

Of this ode mention is made in a humourous poem of that time, called *The Oxford Laureat*; in which, after many claims had been made and rejected, Yalden is repreſented as demanding the laurel, and as being called to his trial, inſtead of receiving a reward.

> His crime was for being a felon in verſe,
> And preſenting his theft to the king;
> The firſt was a trick not uncommon or ſcarce,
> But the laſt was an impudent thing:
> Yet what he has ſtol'n was ſo little worth ſtealing,
> They forgave him the damage and coſt;
> Had he ta'en the whole ode, as he took it piece-mealing,
> They had fin'd him but ten pence at moſt.

The poet whom he was charged with robbing was Congreve.

He wrote another poem on the death of the duke of Glouceſter.

In

In 1700 he became fellow of the college; and next year, entering into Orders, was presented by the society with a living in Warwickshire, consistent with the fellowship, and chosen lecturer of moral philosophy, a very honourable office.

On the accession of queen Anne he wrote another poem; and is said, by the author of the *Biographia*, to have declared himself of the party who had the honourable distinction of High-churchmen.

In 1706 he was received into the family of the duke of Beaufort. Next year he became doctor in divinity, and soon after resigned his fellowship and lecture; and, as a token of his gratitude, gave the college a picture of their founder.

He was made rector of *Chalton* and *Cleanville*, two adjoining towns and benefices in Hertfordshire; and had the prebends, or sinecures, of *Deans*, *Hains*, and *Pendles*, in Devonshire. He had before * been chosen, in 1698, preacher of Bridewell Hospital, upon the resignation of Dr. Atterbury †.

From this time he seems to have led a quiet and inoffensive life, till the clamour was raised about Atterbury's plot. Every loyal eye was on the watch for abettors or partakers of the horrid conspiracy; and Dr. Yalden, having some acquaintance with the bishop, and being familiarly conversant with Kelly his secretary, fell under suspicion, and was taken into custody.

* Not long after.

† Dr. Atterbury retained the office of preacher at Bridewell till his promotion to the Bishoprick of Rochester. Dr. Yalden succeeded him as preacher in June, 1713. N.

Upon his examination he was charged with a dangerous correſpondence with Kelly. The correſpondence he acknowledged; but maintained that it had no treaſonable tendency. His papers were ſeized; but nothing was found that could fix a crime upon him, except two words in his pocket-book, *thorough-paced doctrine.* This expreſſion the imagination of his examiners had impregnated with treaſon, and the doctor was enjoined to explain. Thus preſſed, he told them that the words had lain unheeded in his pocket-book from the time of queen Anne, and that he was aſhamed to give an account of them; but the truth was, that he had gratified his curioſity one day, by hearing *Daniel Burgeſs* in the pulpit, and thoſe words were a memorable hint of a remarkable ſentence by which he warned his congregation to "beware of" thorough-paced doctrine, "that doc-"trine which, coming in at one ear, paces through "the head, and goes out at the other."

Nothing worſe than this appearing in his papers, and no evidence ariſing againſt him, he was ſet at liberty.

It will not be ſuppoſed that a man of this character attained high dignities in the Church; but he ſtill retained the friendſhip, and frequented the converſation, of a very numerous and ſplendid ſet of acquaintance. He died July 16, 1736, in the 66th year of his age.

Of his poems, many are of that irregular kind, which, when he formed his poetical character, was ſuppoſed to be Pindarick. Having fixed his attention on Cowley as a model, he has attempted in ſome ſort to rival him, and has written a *Hymn to Darkneſs,*

ness, evidently as a counter-part to Cowley's *Hymn to Light*.

This hymn ſeems to be his beſt performance, and is, for the moſt part, imagined with great vigour, and expreſſed with great propriety. I will not tranſcribe it. The ſeven firſt ſtanzas are good; but the third, fourth, and ſeventh, are the beſt; the eighth ſeems to involve a contradiction; the tenth is exquiſitely beautiful; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, are partly mythological, and partly religious, and therefore not ſuitable to each other: he might better have made the whole merely philoſophical.

There are two ſtanzas in this poem where Yalden may be ſuſpected, though hardly convicted, of having conſulted the *Hymnus ad Umbram* of *Wowerus*, in the ſixth ſtanza, which anſwers in ſome ſort to theſe lines:

Illa ſuo præeſt nocturnis numine ſacris—
Perque vias errare novis dat ſpectra figuris,
Maneſque excitos medios ululare per agros
Sub noctem, et queſtu notos complere penates.

And again, at the concluſion:

Illa ſuo ſenium ſecludit corpore toto
Haud numerans jugi fugientia ſecula lapſu,
Ergo ubi poſtremum mundi compage ſolutâ
Hanc rerum molem ſuprema abſumpſerit hora
Ipſa leves cineres nube amplectetur opacâ,
Et priſco imperio rurſus dominabitur UMBRA.

His *Hymn to Light* is not equal to the other. He ſeems to think that there is an Eaſt abſolute and poſitive where the Morning riſes.

In

In the laſt ſtanza, having mentioned the ſudden eruption of new-created Light, he ſays,

> A while th' Almighty wond'ring ſtood.

He ought to have remembered that Infinite Knowledge can never wonder. All wonder is the effect of novelty upon ignorance.

Of his other poems it is ſufficient to ſay, that they deſerve peruſal, though they are not always exactly poliſhed, though the rhymes are ſometimes very ill ſorted, and though his faults ſeem rather the omiſſions of idleneſs than the negligences of enthuſiaſm.

TICKELL.

TICKELL.

THOMAS TICKELL, the ſon of the reverend Richard Tickell, was born in 1686 at Bridekirk, in Cumberland; and in 1701 became a member of Queen's college in Oxford; in 1708 he was made Maſter of Arts; and, two years afterwards, was choſen Fellow; for which, as he did not comply with the ſtatutes by taking Orders, he obtained a diſpenſation from the Crown. He held his Fellowſhip till 1726, and then vacated it, by marrying, in that year, at Dublin.

Tickell was not one of thoſe ſcholars who wear away their lives in cloſets; he entered early into the world, and was long buſy in publick affairs; in which he was initiated under the patronage of Addiſon, whoſe notice he is ſaid to have gained by his verſes in praiſe of *Roſamond*.

To thoſe verſes it would not have been juſt to deny regard; for they contain ſome of the moſt elegant encomiaſtick ſtrains; and, among the innumerable poems of the ſame kind, it will be hard to find one with

with which they need to fear a comparifon. It may deferve obfervation, that, when Pope wrote long afterwards in praife of Addifon, he has copied, at leaft has refembled, Tickell.

Let joy falute fair Rofamonda's fhade,
And wreaths of myrtle crown the lovely maid.
While now perhaps with Dido's ghoft fhe roves,
And hears and tells the ftory of their loves,
Alike they mourn, alike they blefs their fate,
Since Love, which made them wretched, made them great.
Nor longer that relentlefs doom bemoan,
Which gain'd a Virgil and an Addifon.

TICKELL.

Then future ages with delight fhall fee
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's, looks agree;
Or in fair feries laurel'd bards be fhown,
A Virgil there, and here an Addifon. POPE.

He produced another piece of the fame kind at the appearance of *Cato*, with equal fkill, but not equal happinefs.

When the minifters of queen Anne were negotiating with France, Tickell publifhed *The Profpect of Peace*, a poem, of which the tendency was to reclaim the nation from the pride of conqueft to the pleafures of tranquillity. How far Tickell, whom Swift afterwards mentioned as *Whiggiffimus*, had then connected himfelf with any party, I know not; this poem certainly did not flatter the practices, or promote, the opinions, of the men by whom he was afterwards befriended.

Mr. Addifon, however he hated the men then in power, fuffered his friendfhip to prevail over his publick

publick ſpirit, and gave in the *Spectator* ſuch praiſes of Tickell's poem, that when, after having long wiſhed to peruſe it, I laid hold on it at laſt, I thought it unequal to the honours which it had received, and found it a piece to be approved rather than admired. But the hope excited by a work of genius, being general and indefinite, is rarely gratified. It was read at that time with ſo much favour, that ſix editions were ſold.

At the arrival of king George he ſang *The Royal Progreſs*; which, being inſerted in the *Spectator*, is well known; and of which it is juſt to ſay, that it is neither high nor low.

The poetical incident of moſt importance in Tickell's life was his publication of the firſt book of the *Iliad*, as tranſlated by himſelf, an apparent oppoſition to Pope's *Homer*, of which the firſt part made its entrance into the world at the ſame time.

Addiſon declared that the rival verſions were both good; but that Tickell's was the beſt that ever was made; and with Addiſon, the wits, his adherents and followers, were certain to concur. Pope does not appear to have been much diſmayed; "for," ſays he, "I have the town, that is, the mob on my ſide." But he remarks, "that it is common for the ſmaller "party to make up in diligence what they want in "numbers; he appeals to the people as his proper "judges; and, if they are not inclined to condemn "him, he is in little care about the high-flyers at "Button's."

Pope did not long think Addiſon an impartial judge; for he conſidered him as the writer of Tickell's

Tickell's verſion. The reaſons for his ſuſpicion I will literally tranſcribe from Mr. Spence's Collection.

"There had been a coldneſs (ſaid Mr. Pope) be-"tween Mr. Addiſon and me for ſome time; and "we had not been in company together, for a good "while, any where but at Button's coffee-houſe, "where I uſed to ſee him almoſt every day.—On his "meeting me there, one day in particular, he took "me aſide, and ſaid he ſhould be glad to dine with "me, at ſuch a tavern, if I ſtaid till thoſe people "were gone (Budgell and Philips). He went accord-"ingly; and after dinner Mr. Addiſon ſaid, 'That "he had wanted for ſome time to talk with me; "that his friend Tickell had formerly, whilſt at "Oxford, tranſlated the firſt book of the *Iliad*; that "he deſigned to print it, and had deſired him to "look it over; that he muſt therefore beg that I "would not deſire him to look over my firſt book, "becauſe, if he did, it would have the air of double-"dealing.' I aſſured him that I did not at all take "it ill of Mr. Tickell that he was going to publiſh "his tranſlation; that he certainly had as much "right to tranſlate any author as myſelf; and that "publiſhing both was entering on a fair ſtage. I "then added, that I would not deſire him to look "over my firſt book of the *Iliad*, becauſe he had "looked over Mr. Tickell's; but could wiſh to "have the benefit of his obſervations on my ſecond, "which I had then finiſhed, and which Mr. Tickell "had not touched upon. Accordingly I ſent him "the ſecond book the next morning; and Mr. Ad-"diſon a few days after returned it, with very high

"com-

"commendations. Soon after it was generally known "that Mr. Tickell was publishing the first book of "the *Iliad*, I met Dr. Young in the street; and up-"on our falling into that subject, the Doctor ex-"pressed a great deal of surprize at Tickell's having "had such a translation so long by him. He said, "that it was inconceivable to him, and that there "must be some mistake in the matter; that each "used to communicate to the other whatever verses "they wrote, even to the least things; that Tickell "could not have been busied in so long a work there "without his knowing something of the matter; "and that he had never heard a single word on it "till on this occasion. This surprize of Dr. Young, "together with what Steele has said against Tickell "in relation to this affair, make it highly probable "that there was some underhand dealing in that bu-"siness; and indeed Tickell himself, who is a very "fair worthy man, has since, in a manner, as good "as owned it to me. When it was introduced into "a conversation between Mr. Tickell and Mr. Pope, "by a third person, Tickell did not deny it; which, "considering his honour, and zeal for his departed "friend, was the same as owning it."

Upon these suspicions, with which Dr. Warburton hints that other circumstances concurred, Pope always in his *Art of Sinking* quotes this book as the work of Addison.

To compare the two translations would be tedious; the palm is now given universally to Pope; but I think the first lines of Tickell's were rather to be preferred; and Pope seems to have since borrowed something from them in the correction of his own.

When

When the Hanover fucceffion was difputed, Tickell gave what affiftance his pen would fupply. His *Letter to Avignon* ftands high among party-poems; it expreffes contempt without coarfenefs, and fuperiority without infolence. It had the fuccefs which it deferved, being five times printed.

He was now intimately united to Mr. Addifon, who, when he went into Ireland as fecretary to the lord Sunderland, took him thither, and employed him in publick bufinefs; and when (1717) afterwards he rofe to be fecretary of ftate, made him under-fecretary. Their friendfhip feems to have continued without abatement; for, when Addifon died, he left him the charge of publifhing his works, with a folemn recommendation to the patronage of Craggs.

To thefe works he prefixed an elegy on the author, which could owe none of its beauties to the affiftance which might be fufpected to have ftrengthened or embellifhed his earlier compofitions; but neither he nor Addifon ever produced nobler lines than are contained in the third and fourth paragraphs; nor is a more elegant funeral-poem to be found in the whole compafs of Englifh literature.

He was afterwards (about 1725) made fecretary to the Lords Juftices of Ireland, a place of great honour; in which he continued till 1740, when he died on the twenty-third of April at Bath.

Of the poems yet unmentioned the longeft is *Kenfington Gardens*, of which the verfification is fmooth and elegant, but the fiction unfkilfully compounded of Grecian Deities and Gothick Fairies. Neither fpecies of thofe exploded Beings could have done much; and, when they are brought together, they

only make each other contemptible. To Tickell, however, cannot be refused a high place among the minor poets; nor should it be forgotten that he was one of the contributors to the *Spectator*. With respect to his personal character, he is said to have been a man of gay conversation, at least a temperate lover of wine and company, and in his domestick relations without censure.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL LIBRARY

HAMMOND.

OF Mr. HAMMOND, though he be well remembered as a man eſteemed and careſſed by the elegant and the great, I was at firſt able to obtain no other memorials than ſuch as are ſupplied by a book called *Cibber's Lives of the Poets*; of which I take this opportunity to teſtify that it was not written, nor, I believe, ever ſeen, by either of the Cibbers; but was the work of Robert Shiels, a native of Scotland, a man of very acute underſtanding, though with little ſcholaſtick education, who, not long after the publication of his work, died in London of a conſumption. His life was virtuous, and his end was pious. Theophilus Cibber, then a priſoner for debt, imparted, as I was told, his name for ten guineas. The manuſcript of Shiels is now in my poſſeſſion.

I have ſince found that Mr. Shiels, though he was no negligent enquirer, had been miſled by falſe accounts; for he relates that James Hammond, the author of the Elegies, was the ſon of a Turkey merchant,

merchant, and had ſome office at the prince of Wales's court, till love of a lady, whoſe name was Daſhwood, for a time diſordered his underſtanding. He was unextinguiſhably amorous, and his miſtreſs inexorably cruel.

Of this narrative, part is true, and part falſe. He was the ſecond ſon of Anthony Hammond, a man of note among the wits, poets, and parliamentary orators, in the beginning of this century, who was allied to Sir Robert Walpole by marrying his ſiſter*. He was born about 1710, and educated at Weſtminſter-ſchool; but it does not appear that he was of any univerſity. He was equerry to the prince of Wales, and ſeems to have come very early into publick notice, and to have been diſtinguiſhed by thoſe whoſe friendſhip prejudiced mankind at that time in favour of the man to whom they were beſtowed; for he was the companion of Cobham, Lyttelton, and Cheſterfield. He is ſaid to have divided his life between pleaſure and books; in his retirement forgetting the town, and in his gaiety loſing the ſtudent. Of his literary hours all the effects are here exhibited, of which the Elegies were written very early, and the Prologue not long before his death.

In 1741, he was choſen into parliament for Truro in Cornwall, probably one of thoſe who were elected by the Prince's influence; and died next year in

* This account is ſtill erroneous. James Hammond, our author, was of a different family, the ſecond ſon of Anthony Hammond, of Somerſham-place, in the county of Huntingdon, Eſq. See Gent. Mag. vol. LVII. p. 780. R.

June at Stowe, the famous ſeat of lord Cobham. His miſtreſs long outlived him, and in 1779 died unmarried. The character which her lover bequeathed her was, indeed, not likely to attract courtſhip.

The elegies were publiſhed after his death; and while the writer's name was remembered with fondneſs, they were read with a reſolution to admire them. The recommendatory preface of the editor, who was then believed, and is now affirmed by Dr. Maty, to be the earl of Cheſter eld, raiſed ſtrong prejudices in their favour.

But the prefacer, whoever he was, it may be reaſonably ſuſpected that he never read the poems; for he profeſſes to value them for a very high ſpecies of excellence, and recommends them as the genuine effuſions of the mind, which expreſſes a real paſſion in the language of nature. But the truth is, theſe elegies have neither paſſion, nature, nor manners. Where there is fiction, there is no paſſion: he that deſcribes himſelf as a ſhepherd, and his Neæra or Delia as a ſhepherdeſs, and talks of goats and lambs, feels no paſſion. He that courts his miſtreſs with Roman imagery deſerves to loſe her; for ſhe may with good reaſon ſuſpect his ſincerity. Hammond has few ſentiments from nature, and few images from modern life. He produces nothing but frigid pedantry. It would be hard to find in all his productions three ſtanzas that deſerve to be remembered.

Like other lovers, he threatens the lady with dying; and what then ſhall follow?

Wilt

Wilt thou in tears thy lovers corſe attend;
  With eyes averted light the ſolemn pyre,
Till all around the doleful flames aſcend,
  Then ſlowly ſinking, by degrees expire?

To ſooth the hovering ſoul be thine the care,
  With plaintive cries to lead the mournful band;
In ſable weeds the golden vaſe to bear,
  And cull my aſhes with thy trembling hand:

Panchaia's odours be their coſtly feaſt,
  And all the pride of Aſia's fragrant year
Give them the treaſures of the fartheſt Eaſt,
  And, what is ſtill more precious, give thy tear.

Surely no blame can fall upon a nymph who rejected a ſwain of ſo little meaning.

His verſes are not rugged, but they have no ſweetneſs; they never glide in a ſtream of melody. Why Hammond or other writers have thought the quartrain of ten ſyllables elegiac, it is difficult to tell. The character of the Elegy is gentleneſs and tenuity; but this ſtanza has been pronounced by Dryden, whoſe knowledge of Engliſh metre was not inconſiderable, to be the moſt magnificent of all meaſures which our language affords.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

SOMERVILE.

OF Mr. SOMERVILE's life I am not able to ſay any thing that can ſatisfy curioſity.

He was a gentleman whoſe eſtate was in Warwickſhire; his houſe, where he was born in 1692, is called Edſton, a ſeat inherited from a long line of anceſtors; for he was ſaid to be of the firſt family in his county. He tells of himſelf that he was born near the Avon's banks. He was bred at Wincheſter-ſchool, and was elected fellow of New College. It does not appear that in the places of his education he exhibited any uncommon proofs of genius or literature. His powers were firſt diſplayed in the country, where he was diſtinguiſhed as a poet, a gentleman, and a ſkilful and uſeful juſtice of the peace.

Of the cloſe of his life, thoſe whom his poems have delighted will read with pain the following account, copied from the Letters of his friend Shenſtone, by whom he was too much reſembled.

"—Our old friend Somervile is dead! I did not
" imagine I could have been ſo ſorry as I find myſelf
" on this occaſion.—*Sublatum quærimus.* I can now

" excuſe

"excufe all his foibles; impute them to age, and to "diftrefs of circumftances: the laft of thefe confi-"derations wrings my very foul to think on. For a "man of high fpirit, confcious of having (at leaft "in one production) generally pleafed the world, to "be plagued and threatened by wretches that are "low in every fenfe; to be forced to drink himfelf "into pains of the body, in order to get rid of the "pains of the mind, is a mifery."—He died July 19, 1742, and was buried at Wotton, near Henley on Arden.

His diftreffes need not be much pitied: his eftate is faid to be fifteen hundred a year, which by his death has devolved to lord Somervile of Scotland. His mother indeed, who lived till ninety, had a jointure of fix hundred.

It is with regret that I find myfelf not better enabled to exhibit memorials of a writer, who at leaft muft be allowed to have fet a good example to men of his own clafs, by devoting part of his time to elegant knowledge; and who was fhewn, by the fubjects which his poetry has adorned, that it is practicable to be at once a fkilful fportfman and a man of letters.

Somervile has tried many modes of poetry; and though perhaps he has not in any reached fuch excellence as to raife much envy, it may commonly be faid at leaft, that "he writes very well for a "gentleman." His ferious pieces are fometimes elevated, and his trifles are fometimes elegant. In his verfes to Addifon, the couplet which mentions *Clio* is written with the moft exquifite delicacy of praife; it exhibits one of thofe happy ftrokes that

are ſeldom attained. In his Odes to Marlborough there are beautiful lines; but in the ſecond Ode he ſhews that he knew little of his hero, when he talks of his private virtues. His ſubjects are commonly ſuch as require no great depth of thought or energy of expreſſion. His Fables are generally ſtale, and therefore excite no curioſity. Of his favourite, *The Two Springs*, the fiction is unnatural, and the moral inconſequential. In his Tales there is too much coarſeneſs, with too little care of language, and not ſufficient rapidity of narration.

His great work is his *Chace*, which he undertook in his maturer age, when his ear was improved to the approbation of blank verſe, of which however his two firſt lines gave a bad ſpecimen. To this poem praiſe cannot be totally denied. He is allowed by ſportſmen to write with great intelligence of his ſubject, which is the firſt requiſite to excellence; and though it is impoſſible to intereſt the common readers of verſe in the dangers or pleaſures of the chace, he has done all that tranſition and variety could eaſily effect; and has with great propriety enlarged his plan by the modes of hunting uſed in other countries.

With ſtill leſs judgment did he chuſe blank verſe as the vehicle of *Rural Sports*. If blank verſe be not tumid and gorgeous, it is crippled proſe; and familiar images in laboured language have nothing to recommend them but abſurd novelty, which, wanting the attractions of Nature, cannot pleaſe long. One excellence of the *Splendid Shilling* is, that it is ſhort. Diſguiſe can gratify no longer than it deceives.

SAVAGE.

IT has been obſerved in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happineſs; and that thoſe whom the ſplendour of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the ſummit of human life, have not often given any juſt occaſion to envy in thoſe who look up to them from a lower ſtation; whether it be that apparent ſuperiority incites great deſigns, and great deſigns are naturally liable to fatal miſcarriages; or that the general lot of mankind is miſery, and the misfortunes of thoſe, whoſe eminence drew upon them an univerſal attention, have been more carefully recorded, becauſe they were more generally obſerved, and have in reality been only more conſpicuous than thoſe of others, not more frequent, or more ſevere.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinſick and adventitious, and therefore eaſily ſeparable from thoſe by whom they are poſſeſſed, ſhould very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they

they cannot give, raiſes no aſtoniſhment; but it ſeems rational to hope, that intellectual greatneſs ſhould produce better effects; that minds qualified for great attainments ſhould firſt endeavour their own benefit; and that they, who are moſt able to teach others the way to happineſs, ſhould with moſt certainty follow it themſelves.

But this expectation, however plauſible, has been very frequently diſappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil hiſtory have been very often no leſs remarkable for what they have ſuffered, than for what they have atchieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miſeries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives, and untimely deaths.

To theſe mournful narratives, I am about to add the Life of Richard Savage, a man whoſe writings entitle him to an eminent rank in the claſſes of learning, and whoſe misfortunes claim a degree of compaſſion, not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the conſequences of the crimes of others, rather than his own.

In the year 1697, Anne Counteſs of Macclesfield, having lived ſome time upon very uneaſy terms with her huſband, thought a public confeſſion of adultery the moſt obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty; and therefore declared, that the child, with which ſhe was then great, was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be imagined, made her huſband no leſs deſirous of a ſeparation than herſelf, and he proſecuted his deſign in the moſt effectual manner; for he applied not to the eccleſiaſtical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be diſ-

diſſolved, the nuptial contract annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimated. This act, after the uſual deliberation, he obtained, though without the approbation of ſome, who conſidered marriage as an affair only cognizable by eccleſiaſtical judges *; and on March 3d was ſeparated from his wife, whoſe fortune, which was very great, was repaid her, and who having, as well as her huſband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a ſhort time married to Colonel Brett.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was proſecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January, 1697-8, delivered of a ſon; and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to conſider him as his own, left none any reaſon to doubt of the ſincerity of her declaration; for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inſerted in the regiſter of St. Andrew's pariſh in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as ſhe was now ſet free from her huſband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderneſs the child that had contributed to ſo pleaſing an event. It is not indeed eaſy to diſcover what motives could be found to over-balance that natural affection of a

* This year was made remarkable by the diſſolution of a marriage ſolemnized in the face of the church. SALMON'S REVIEW.

The following proteſt is regiſtered in the books of the Houſe of Lords.

Diſſentient.

Becauſe that we conceive that this is the firſt bill of that nature that hath paſſed, where there was not a divorce firſt obtained in the Spiritual Court; which we look upon as an ill precedent, and may be of dangerous conſequence in the future.

HALIFAX. ROCHESTER.

parent,

parent, or what intereſt could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of ſhame or of poverty, by which ſome wretches have been incited to abandon or to murder their children, cannot be ſuppoſed to have affected a woman who had proclaimed her crimes and ſolicited reproach, and on whom the clemency of the legiſlature had undeſervedly beſtowed a fortune, which would have been very little diminiſhed by the expences which the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that ſhe would be wicked without temptation; that ſhe would look upon her ſon from his birth with a kind of reſentment and abhorrence; and, inſtead of ſupporting, aſſiſting, and defending him, delight to ſee him ſtruggling with miſery, or that ſhe would take every opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and obſtructing his reſources, and with an implacable and reſtleſs cruelty continue her perſecution from the firſt hour of his life to the laſt.

But whatever were her motives, no ſooner was her ſon born, than ſhe diſcovered a reſolution of diſowning him; and in a very ſhort time removed him from her ſight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom ſhe directed to educate him as her own, and injoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage. Born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and diſowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obſcurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be ſwallowed by its quickſands, or daſhed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the fame cruelty. As it was impoffible to avoid the inquiries which the curiofity or tendernefs of her relations made after her child, fhe was obliged to give fome account of the meafures fhe had taken; and her mother, the Lady Mafon, whether in approbation of her defign, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to tranfact with the nurfe, to pay her for her care, and to fuperintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office fhe was affifted by his godmother Mrs. Lloyd, who, while fhe lived, always looked upon him with that tendernefs which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly neceffary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood; for though fhe kindly endeavoured to alleviate his lofs by a legacy of three hundred pounds, yet, as he had none to profecute his claim, to fhelter him from oppreffion, or call in law to the affiftance of juftice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was, however, not yet wholly abandoned. The Lady Mafon ftill continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a fmall grammar-fchool near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurfe, without the leaft intimation that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and paffed through feveral of the claffes, with what rapidity or with what applaufe cannot now be known. As he always fpoke with refpect of his mafter, it is probable that the mean rank, in which he then appeared, did

not hinder his genius from being diſtinguiſhed, or his induſtry from being rewarded; and if in ſo low a ſtate he obtained diſtinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and induſtry.

It is very reaſonable to conjecture, that his application was equal to his abilities, becauſe his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted, that if his earlieſt productions had been preſerved, like thoſe of happier ſtudents, we might in ſome have found vigorous ſallies of that ſprightly humour which diſtinguiſhes *The Author to be let*, and in others ſtrong touches of that imagination which painted the ſolemn ſcenes of *The Wanderer*.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father the Earl of Rivers was ſeized with a diſtemper, which in a ſhort time put an end to his life *. He had frequently inquired after his ſon, and had always been amuſed with fallacious and evaſive anſwers; but, being now in his own opinion on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a poſitive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuſe an anſwer, determined at leaſt to give ſuch as ſhould cut him off for ever from that happineſs which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the firſt inſtance of a lye invented by a mother to deprive her ſon of a proviſion which was deſigned

* He died Aug. 18th, 1712. R.

him

him by another, and which ſhe could not expect herſelf, though he ſhould loſe it.

This was therefore an act of wickedneſs which could not be defeated, becauſe it could not be ſuſpected; the Earl did not imagine there could exiſt in a human form a mother that would ruin her ſon without enriching herſelf, and therefore beſtowed upon ſome other perſon ſix thouſand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The ſame cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this proviſion which had been intended him, prompted her in a ſhort time to another project, a project worthy of ſuch a diſpoſition. She endeavoured to rid herſelf from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by ſending him ſecretly to the American Plantations *.

By whoſe kindneſs this ſcheme was counteracted, or by whoſe interpoſition ſhe was induced to lay aſide her deſign, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Maſon might perſuade or compel her to deſiſt, or perhaps ſhe could not eaſily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in ſo cruel an action; for it may be conceived, that thoſe, who had by a long gradation of guilt hardened their hearts againſt the ſenſe of common wickedneſs, would yet be ſhocked at the deſign of a mother to expoſe her ſon to ſlavery and want, to expoſe him without intereſt, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occaſion find protectors and advocates among thoſe who had long traded in crimes, and whom compaſſion had never touched before.

* Savage's Preface to his Miſcellanies.

Being

Being hindered, by whatever means, from baniſhing him into another country, ſhe formed ſoon after a ſcheme for burying him in poverty and obſcurity in his own; and that his ſtation of life, if not the place of his reſidence, might keep him for ever at a diſtance from her, ſhe ordered him to be placed with a ſhoe-maker in Holborn, that, after the uſual time of trial, he might become his apprentice *.

It is generally reported, that this project was for ſome time ſucceſsful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confeſs; nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him, that an unexpected diſcovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurſe, who had always treated him as her own ſon, died; and it was natural for him to take care of thoſe effects which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own: he therefore went to her houſe, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he found ſome letters written to her by the Lady Maſon, which informed him of his birth, and the reaſons for which it was concealed.

He was no longer ſatisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to ſhare the affluence of his mother; and therefore without ſcruple applied to her as her ſon, and made uſe of every art to awaken her tenderneſs, and attract her regard. But neither his letters, nor the interpoſition of thoſe friends which his merit or his diſtreſs procured him, made any impreſſion upon

* Savage's Preface to his Miſcellanies.

her

her mind. She ſtill reſolved to neglect, though ſhe could no longer diſown him.

It was to no purpoſe that he frequently ſolicited her to admit him to ſee her; ſhe avoided him with the moſt vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her houſe, by whomſoever he might be introduced, and what reaſon ſoever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the ſame time ſo touched with the diſcovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings* for ſeveral hours before her door, in hopes of ſeeing her as ſhe might come by accident to the window, or croſs her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all his aſſiduity and tenderneſs were without effect, for he could neither ſoften her heart nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmoſt miſeries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother. He was therefore obliged to ſeek ſome other means of ſupport; and, having no profeſſion, became by neceſſity an author.

At this time the attention of the literary world was engroſſed by the Bangorian controverſy, which filled the preſs with pamphlets, and the coffee-houſes with diſputants. Of this ſubject, as moſt popular, he made choice for his firſt attempt, and, without any other knowledge of the queſtion than he had caſually collected from converſation, publiſhed a poem againſt the Biſhop †.

What was the ſucceſs or merit of this performance, I know not; it was probably loſt among the innumerable

* See the Plain Dealer.

† It was called "The Battle of the Pamphlets." R.

merable pamphlets to which that diſpute gave occaſion. Mr. Savage was himſelf in a little time aſhamed of it, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs it, by deſtroying all the copies that he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing*, and in his eighteenth year offered to the ſtage a comedy borrowed from a Spaniſh plot, which was refuſed by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more intereſt, made ſome ſlight alterations, and brought it upon the ſtage, under the title of WOMAN'S A RIDDLE †, but allowed the unhappy author no part of the profit.

Not diſcouraged however at his repulſe, he wrote two years afterwards LOVE IN A VEIL, another comedy, borrowed likewiſe from the Spaniſh, but with little better ſucceſs than before: for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared ſo late in the year, that the author obtained no other advantage from it, than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilks, by whom he was pitied, careſſed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele, having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which conſtituted his character, promoted his intereſt with the utmoſt zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all the opportunities of recommending him, and aſſerted, that "the inhumanity of his mother "had given him a right to find every good man his "father ‡."

* Jacob's Lives of the Dramatick Poets. Dr. J.

† This play was printed firſt in 8vo; and afterwards in 12mo, the fifth edition. Dr. J.

‡ Plain Dealer.

Nor

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he ſometimes related an inſtance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very juſt idea of his patron's character.

He was once deſired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmoſt importance, to come very early to his houſe the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promiſed, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to enquire; but immediately ſeated himſelf with Sir Richard. The coachman was ordered to drive, and they hurried with the utmoſt expedition to Hyde-Park Corner, where they ſtopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publiſh a pamphlet, and that he had deſired him to come thither that he might write for him. He ſoon ſat down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was ſurpriſed at the meanneſs of the entertainment, and after ſome heſitation ventured to aſk for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finiſhed their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his taſk over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home; but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him that he was without money, and that the pamphlet muſt be ſold before the dinner

could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his life, ought to be preserved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his house a great number of persons of the first quality, they were surprised at the number of liveries which surrounded the table; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had set them free from the observation of a rigid ceremony, one of them enquired of Sir Richard, how such an expensive train of domesticks could be consistent with his fortune. Sir Richard very frankly confessed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid. And being then asked why he did not discharge them, declared that they were bailiffs, who had introduced themselves with an execution, and whom, since he could not send them away, he had thought it convenient to embellish with liveries, that they might do him credit while they staid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt discharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promise that they should never again find him graced with a retinue of the same kind.

Under such a tutor Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality; and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of those virtues

brought

brought upon him in the following parts of his life, might be juſtly imputed to ſo unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindneſs of Sir Richard end in common favours. He propoſed to have eſtabliſhed him in ſome ſettled ſcheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to beſtow a thouſand pounds. But though he was always laviſh of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in ſuch a manner, that he was very ſeldom able to keep his promiſes, or execute his own intentions: and, as he was never able to raiſe the ſum which he had offered, the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiouſly informed, that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was ſo much exaſperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his houſe.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expoſe himſelf to the malice of a tale-bearer; for his patron had many follies, which, as his diſcernment eaſily diſcovered, his imagination might ſometimes incite him to mention too ludicrouſly. A little knowledge of the world is ſufficient to diſcover that ſuch weakneſs is very common, and that there are few who do not ſometimes, in the wantonneſs of thoughtleſs mirth, or the heat of tranſient reſentment, ſpeak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither ſenſe of their kindneſs, nor reverence for their virtue; the fault therefore of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude. But

Sir Richard muſt likewiſe be acquitted of ſeverity; for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and ſupported, whoſe eſtabliſhment he has laboured, and whoſe intereſt he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to fortune without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man, who, whatever were his abilities or ſkill as an actor, deſerves at leaſt to be remembered for his virtues*, which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps leſs often in his profeſſion than in others. To be humane, generous, and candid, is a very high degree

* As it is a loſs to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I ſhall inſert another inſtance of Mr. Wilks's generoſity, very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends deſigned him, left his own country, and came to London in queſt of employment, but found his ſolicitations fruitleſs, and his neceſſities every day more preſſing. In this diſtreſs he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his laſt hopes defeated, and he had no other proſpect than of the moſt deplorable poverty. But Mr. Wilks thought his performance, though not perfect, at leaſt worthy of ſome reward, and therefore offered him a benefit. This favour he improved with ſo much diligence, that the houſe afforded him a conſiderable ſum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himſelf to the ſtudy of phyſick, and proſecuted his deſign with ſo much diligence and ſucceſs, that, when Dr. Boerhaave was deſired by the Czarina to recommend proper perſons to introduce into Ruſſia the practice and ſtudy of phyſick, Dr. Smith was one of thoſe whom he had ſelected. He had a conſiderable penſion ſettled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief phyſicians at the Ruſſian court. Dr. J.

A Letter from Dr. Smith in Ruſſia to Mr. Wilks is printed in Chetwood's Hiſtory of the Stage. R.

of

of merit in any case; but those qualifications deserve still greater praise, when they are found in that condition which makes almost every other man, for whatever reason, contemptuous, insolent, petulant, selfish, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilks was one of those to whom calamity seldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only assisted him in any casual distresses, but continued an equal and steady kindness to the time of his death.

By this interposition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother * fifty pounds, and a promise of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man, that few promises of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected, among others, with the general madness of the South Sea traffick; and, having been disappointed in her expectations, refused to pay what perhaps nothing but the prospect of sudden affluence prompted her to promise.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendship of Mr. Wilks, he was consequently an assiduous frequenter of the theatres; and in a short time the amusements of the stage took such possession of his mind, that he never was absent from a play in several years.

This constant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and, among others,

* This I write upon the credit of the author of his life, which was published 1727. Dr. J.

of Mrs. Oldfield, who was ſo much pleaſed with his converſation, and touched with his miſfortunes, that ſhe allowed him a ſettled penſion of fifty pounds a year, which was during her life regularly paid.

That this act of generoſity may receive its due praiſe, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be ſullied by her general character, it is proper to mention that Mr. Savage often declared, in the ſtrongeſt terms, that he never ſaw her alone, or in any other place than behind the ſcenes.

At her death he endeavoured to ſhew his gratitude in the moſt decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother; but did not celebrate her in elegies *, becauſe he knew that too great a profuſion of praiſe would only have revived thoſe faults which his natural equity did not allow him to think leſs, becauſe they were committed by one who favoured him: but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not ſuffer him to prolong the memory or diffuſe the cenſure.

In his *Wanderer*, he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her; but celebrates her not for her virtue, but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her; this is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too laviſh of his praiſe. He ſeems to have thought, that never to mention his benefactreſs would have an appearance of ingrati-

* Chetwood, however, has printed a Poem on her death, which he aſcribes to Mr Savage. See Hiſtory of the Stage, p. 206. R.

tude,

-tude, though to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious partiality, and that, without exalting her character, would have depreffed his own.

He had fometimes, by the kindnefs of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occafions he often received uncommon marks of regard and compaffion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorfet, that it was juft to confider him as an injured nobleman, and that in his opinion the nobility ought to think themfelves obliged, without folicitation, to take every opportunity of fupporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole intereft of his mother was employed to fruftrate his applications, and that fhe never left any expedient untried, by which he might be cut off from the poffibility of fupporting life. The fame difpofition fhe endeavoured to diffufe among all thofe over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed fucceeded too well in her defign; but could not always propagate her effrontery with her cruelty; for, fome of thofe, whom fhe incited againft him, were afhamed of their own conduct, and boafted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this cenfure I do not indifcriminately involve all his relations; for he has mentioned with gratitude the humanity of one lady, whofe name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom therefore I cannot pay the praifes which fhe deferves for having acted well in oppofition to influence, precept, and example.

The

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its justice ever been contested; but, if they deserve death who destroy a child in its birth, what pain can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make him miserable; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities; and, when his own industry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress?

The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune by enlarging his acquaintance necessarily leading him to places of expence, he found it necessary to * endeavour once more at dramatick poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extensive knowledge, and longer observation. But having been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he resolved to try whether he should not be more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject, was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the present age to admit properly the fictions necessary to complete the plan; for the mind,

* In 1723.

which

which naturally loves truth, is always moſt offended with the violation of thoſe truths of which we are moſt certain; and we of courſe conceive thoſe facts moſt certain, which approach nearer to our own time.

Out of this ſtory he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumſtances in which he wrote it be conſidered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of ſtrength of genius, and evenneſs of mind, of a ſerenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be ſuppreſſed.

During a conſiderable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniences for ſtudy than the fields or the ſtreets allowed him; there he uſed to walk and form his ſpeeches, and afterwards ſtep into a ſhop, beg for a few moments the uſe of the pen and ink, and write down what he had compoſed upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus diſtreſſed is not perfect, its faults ought ſurely to be imputed to a cauſe very different from want of genius, and muſt rather excite pity than provoke cenſure.

But when under theſe diſcouragements the tragedy was finiſhed, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the ſtage, an undertaking, which, to an ingenuous mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and diſguſting; for, having little intereſt or reputation, he was obliged to ſubmit himſelf wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always conſidered as the diſgrace of his performance.

He

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critick of a very different clafs, from whofe friendfhip he received great affiftance on many occafions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmoft tendernefs and regard. He had been for fome time diftinguifhed by him with very particular kindnefs, and on this occafion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an eftablifhed character. He therefore fent this tragedy to him, with a fhort copy of verfes *, in which he defired his correction. Mr. Hill, whofe humanity and politenefs are generally known, readily complied with his requeft; but as he is remarkable for fingularity of fentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think this play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject feveral paffages which he could not approve; and, what is ftill more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generofity not to refent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the prologue and epilogue, in which he touches on the circumftances of the author with great tendernefs.

After all thefe obftructions and compliances, he was only able to bring his play upon the ftage in the fummer, when the chief actors had retired, and the reft were in poffeffion of the houfe for their own advantage. Among thefe, Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury †, by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for

* Printed in the late Collection of his Poems.

† It was acted only three nights, the firft on June 12, 1723. When the houfe opened for the winter feafon it was once more performed, for the author's benefit, Oct. 2. R.

which

which nature seems not to have designed him; for neither his voice, look, nor gesture, were such as were expected on the stage; and he was so much ashamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the list, when a copy of his tragedy was to be shewn to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more succefsful, for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered through all the mists which poverty and Cibber had been able to spread over it, procured him the notice and esteem of many persons eminent for their rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits arose to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large sum, having been never master of so much before.

In the Dedication *, for which he received ten guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellence of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not in the latter part of his life see his friends about to read without snatching the play out of their hands. The generosity of Mr. Hill did not end on this occasion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's necessities returned, he encouraged a subscription to a Miscellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publishing his story in the *Plain*

* To Herbert Tryst, Esq. of Herefordshire. Dr. J.

*Dealer**, with ſome affecting lines, which he aſſerts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himſelf the author, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. Theſe lines, and the paper in which they were inſerted, had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her averſion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the ſubſcription to the Miſcellany, but furniſhed likewiſe the greateſt part of the Poems of which it is compoſed, and particularly *The Happy Man*, which he publiſhed as a ſpecimen.

The ſubſcriptions of thoſe whom theſe papers ſhould influence to patroniſe merit in diſtreſs, without any other ſolicitation, were directed to be left at Button's coffee-houſe; and Mr. Savage going thither a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his propoſal, found to his ſurpriſe ſeventy guineas †, which had been ſent him in conſequence of the compaſſion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic repreſentation.

* The *Plain Dealer* was a periodical paper, written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Savage called the two contending powers of light and darkneſs. They wrote by turns each Eſſays; and the character of the work was obſerved regularly to riſe in Mr. Hill's weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's. Dr. J.

† The names of thoſe who ſo generouſly contributed to his relief, having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Ducheſs of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Caſtlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Ducheſs Dowager and Ducheſs of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Counteſs Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Soſuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainsborough, Lord Milſington, Mr. John Savage. Dr. J.

To

To this Miſcellany he wrote a Preface, in which he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon ſtrain of humour, and with a gaiety of imagination, which the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription probably produced.

The Dedication is addreſſed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whom he flatters without reſerve, and, to confeſs the truth, with very little art*. The ſame obſervation may be extended to all his dedications: his compliments are conſtrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order, or the decency of introduction: he ſeems to have written his panegyricks for the peruſal only of his patrons, and to imagine that he had no other taſk than to pamper them with praiſes however groſs, and that flattery would make its way to the heart, without the aſſiſtance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards the death of the king furniſhed a general ſubject for a poetical conteſt, in which Mr

* This the following extract from it will prove:
—" Since our country has been honoured with the glory of " your wit, as elevated and immortal as your ſoul, it no longer " remains a doubt whether your ſex have ſtrength of mind in " proportion to their ſweetneſs. There is ſomething in your " verſes as diſtinguiſhed as your air.—They are ſtrong as truth, " as deep as reaſon, as clear as innocence, and as ſmooth as " beauty.—They contain a nameleſs and peculiar mixture of " force and grace, which is at once ſo movingly ſerene, and ſo " majeſtically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear any " where but in your eyes and writings.

" As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of " flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to your " Ladyſhip, becauſe there is ſcarce a poſſibility that I ſhould " ſay more than I believe, when I am ſpeaking of your excel- " lence." Dr. J.

Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors: but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increafe of his reputation; though it muft certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed upon himfelf to attempt a fpecies of writing, of which all the topicks had been long before exhaufted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and thofe that had fucceeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very diftrefsful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind when both his fame and his life were endangered by an event, of which it is not yet determined whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November, 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might purfue his ftudies with lefs interruption, with an intent to difcharge another lodging which he had in Weftminfter; and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whofe names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffee-houfe, and fat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the firft of the company that defired to feparate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the fame houfe; but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the ftreets, and divert themfelves with fuch amufements as fhould offer themfelves till morning.

In

In this walk they happened unluckily to discover a light in Robinson's coffee-house near Charing-cross, and therefore went in. Merchant with some rudeness demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not satisfied with this answer, rushed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himself between the company and the fire, and soon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel, swords were drawn on both sides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage, having likewise wounded a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the house; but being intimidated and confused, without resolution either to fly or stay, they were taken in a back-court by one of the company, and some soldiers, whom he had called to his assistance.

Being secured and guarded that night, they were in the morning carried before three justices, who committed them to the Gatehouse, from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the same day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with some distinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined, not among the common criminals, but in the Press-yard.

When the day of trial came, the court was crowded in a very unusual manner; and the publick appeared to interest itself as in a cause of general concern. The witnesses against Mr. Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the house, which was a house of ill fame, and her maid, the men who

were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been ſeen in bed. They ſwore in general, that Merchant gave the provocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their ſwords to juſtify; that Savage drew firſt, and that he ſtabbed Sinclair when he was not in a poſture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his ſword; that after he had given the thruſt he turned pale, and would have retired, but the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There was ſome difference in their depoſitions; one did not ſee Savage give the wound, another ſaw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the town aſſerted, that ſhe did not ſee Sinclair's ſword at all: this difference however was very far from amounting to inconſiſtency; but it was ſufficient to ſhew, that the hurry of the diſpute was ſuch, that it was not eaſy to diſcover the truth with relation to particular circumſtances, and that therefore ſome deductions were to be made from the credibility of the teſtimonies.

Sinclair had declared ſeveral times before his death, that he received his wound from Savage: nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it, by urging the ſuddenneſs of the whole action, and the impoſſibility of any ill deſign, or premeditated malice; and partly to juſtify it by the neceſſity of ſelf-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had loſt that opportunity of giving the thruſt: he obſerved, that neither reaſon nor law

law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he ſhould ſuffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was allowable to prevent an aſſault, and to preſerve life by taking away that of the adverſary, by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to eſcape, he declared, that it was not his deſign to fly from juſtice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and ſeverities of a priſon; and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulſion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the moſt attentive and reſpectful ſilence: thoſe who thought he ought not to be acquitted, owned that applauſe could not be refuſed him; and thoſe who before pitied his misfortunes, now reverenced his abilities.

The witneſſes which appeared againſt him were proved to be perſons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit; a common ſtrumpet, a woman by whom ſtrumpets were entertained, a man by whom they were ſupported: and the character of Savage was by ſeveral perſons of diſtinction aſſerted to be that of a modeſt inoffenſive man, not inclined to broils or to inſolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his uſual inſolence and ſeverity, and when he had ſummed up

the evidence, endeavoured to exasperate the jury; as Mr. Savage used to relate it, with this eloquent harangue:

'Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consider that 'Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater 'man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he 'wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you 'or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance 'of money in his pocket, much more money than you 'or I, gentlemen of the jury; but, gentlemen of the 'jury, is it not a very hard case, gentlemen of the 'jury, that Mr. Savage should therefore kill you or 'me, gentlemen of the jury?'

Mr. Savage, hearing his defence thus misrepresented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited against him by invidious comparisons, resolutely asserted, that his cause was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before said with regard to his condition, and the necessity of endeavouring to escape the expences of imprisonment; but the judge having ordered him to be silent, and repeated his orders without effect, commanded that he should be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the judge, that good characters were of no weight against positive evidence, though they might turn the scale where it was doubtful; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only manslaughter; but where one is the aggressor, as in the case before them, and, in pursuance of his first attack, kills the other, the law supposes the action, however sudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and

and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder; and Mr Merchant, who had no ſword, only of manſlaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which laſted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to priſon, where they were more cloſely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight: four days afterwards they were ſent back to the court to receive ſentence; on which occaſion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following ſpeech:

"It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any thing "by way of defence or vindication; nor can we ex-"pect from your Lordſhips, in this court, but the "ſentence which the law requires you, as judges, to "pronounce againſt men of our calamitous condition. "—But we are alſo perſuaded, that as mere men, "and out of this ſeat of rigorous juſtice, you are "ſuſceptive of the tender paſſions, and too humane "not to commiſerate the unhappy ſituation of thoſe, "whom the law ſometimes perhaps—exacts—from "you to pronounce upon. No doubt you diſtinguiſh "between offences which ariſe out of premeditation, "and a diſpoſition habituated to vice or immorality, "and tranſgreſſions, which are the unhappy and "unforeſeen effects of caſual abſence of reaſon, and "ſudden impulſe of paſſion: we therefore hope you "will contribute all you can to an extenſion of that "mercy, which the gentlemen of the jury have been "pleaſed to ſhew Mr. Merchant, who (allowing facts "as ſworn againſt us by the evidence) has led us "into this our calamity. I hope this will not be "conſtrued as if we meant to reflect upon that gen-

"tleman, or remove any thing from us upon him, " or that we repine the more at our fate, becauſe he " has no participation of it: No, my Lord! For my " part, I declare nothing could more ſoften my " grief, than to be without any companion in ſo " great a misfortune *."

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earneſtly ſolicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the ſtory may obtain belief, was obſtructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen againſt him, ſhe made uſe of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpoſe which it was made to ſerve. Mr. Savage, when he had diſcovered his birth, had an inceſſant deſire to ſpeak to his mother, who always avoided him in publick, and refuſed him admiſſion into her houſe. One evening walking, as it was his cuſtom, in the ſtreet that ſhe inhabited, he ſaw the door of her houſe by accident open; he entered it, and, finding no perſon in the paſſage to hinder him, went up ſtairs to ſalute her. She diſcovered him before he entered the chamber, alarmed the family with the moſt diſtreſsful outcries, and, when ſhe had by her ſcreams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the houſe that villain, who had forced himſelf in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the moſt ſubmiſſive tenderneſs to ſoften her rage, hearing her utter ſo deteſtable an accuſation, thought it prudent to re-

* Mr. Savage's Life.

tire;

tire; and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to ſpeak to her.

But, ſhocked as he was with her falſehood and her cruelty, he imagined that ſhe intended no other uſe of her lye, than to ſet herſelf free from his embraces and ſolicitations, and was very far from ſuſpecting that ſhe would treaſure it in her memory as an inſtrument of future wickedneſs, or that ſhe would endeavour for this fictitious aſſault to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was ſolicited for his pardon, and informed of the ſevere treatment which he had ſuffered from his judge, ſhe anſwered, that, however unjuſtifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, ſhe could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy, who had been capable of entering his mother's houſe in the night, with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been tranſmitted to the Queen; whether ſhe that invented had the front to relate it; whether ſhe found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful deſign; I know not: but methods had been taken to perſuade the Queen ſo ſtrongly of the truth of it, that ſhe for a long time refuſed to hear any one of thoſe who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage periſhed by the evidence of a bawd, a ſtrumpet, and his mother, had not juſtice and compaſſion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit

and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countefs of Hertford, who engaged in his fupport with all the tendernefs that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generofity; and, demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole feries of his mother's cruelty, expofed the improbability of an accufation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and foon convinced her how little his former conduct could deferve to be mentioned as a reafon for extraordinary feverity.

The interpofition of this Lady was fo fuccefsful, that he was foon after admitted to bail, and, on the 9th of March, 1728, pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to enquire upon what motives his mother could perfecute him in a manner fo outrageous and implacable; for what reafon fhe could employ all the arts of malice, and all the fnares of calumny, to take away the life of her own fon, of a fon who never injured her, who was never fupported by her expence, nor obftructed any profpect of pleafure or advantage: why fhe would endeavour to deftroy him by a lye—a lye which could not gain credit, but muft vanifh of itfelf at the firft moment of examination, and of which only this can be faid to make it probable, that it may be obferved from her conduct, that the moft execrable crimes are fometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is ftill alive *, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was fo often defeated, enjoy

* She died Oct. 11, 1753, at her houfe in Old Bond Street, aged above fourfcore. R.

the

the pleaſure of reflecting, that the life, which ſhe often endeavoured to deſtroy, was at laſt ſhortened by her maternal offices; that though ſhe could not tranſport her ſon to the plantations, bury him in the ſhop of a mechanic, or haſten the hand of the publick executioner, ſhe has yet had the ſatisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigencies that hurried on his death.

It is by no means neceſſary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in oppoſition to that of the Counteſs of Hertford; no one can fail to obſerve how much more amiable it is to relieve, than to oppreſs, and to reſcue innocence from deſtruction, than to deſtroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his impriſonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under ſentence of death, behaved with great firmneſs and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the eſteem of thoſe who before admired him for his abilities*. The peculiar circumſtances of his life were made more generally known by a ſhort account†, which was

* It appears that during his confinement he wrote a letter to his mother, which he ſent to Theophilus Cibber, that it might be tranſmitted to her through the means of Mr. Wilks. In his Letter to Cibber he ſays—"As to death, I am eaſy, and dare meet it like a man—all that touches me is the concern of my friends, and a reconcilement with my mother—I cannot expreſs the agony I felt when I wrote the letter to her—if you can find any decent excuſe for ſhewing it to Mrs. Oldfield, do; for I would have all my friends (and that admirable lady in particular) be ſatisfied I have done my duty towards it—Dr. Young to-day ſent me a letter, moſt paſſionately kind." R.

† Written by Mr. Beckingham and another gentleman. Dr. J. then

then publiſhed, and of which ſeveral thouſands were in a few weeks diſperſed over the nation: and the compaſſion of mankind operated ſo powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled, by frequent preſents, not only to ſupport himſelf, but to aſſiſt Mr. Gregory in priſon; and, when he was pardoned and releaſed, he found the number of his friends not leſſened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itſelf doubtful; of the evidences which appeared againſt him, the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the women notoriouſly infamous; ſhe, whoſe teſtimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him, afterwards retracted her aſſertions. He always himſelf denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now (1744) Collector of Antigua, is ſaid to declare him far leſs criminal than he was imagined, even by ſome who favoured him; and Page himſelf afterwards confeſſed, that he had treated him with uncommon rigour. When all theſe particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much ſullied by his trial.

Some time after he obtained his liberty, he met in the ſtreet the woman that had ſworn with ſo much malignity againſt him. She informed him, that ſhe was in diſtreſs, and, with a degree of confidence not eaſily attainable, deſired him to relieve her. He, inſtead of inſulting her miſery, and taking pleaſure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury; and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himſelf.

This

This is an action which in ſome ages would have made a ſaint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without any hyperbolical encomiums, muſt be allowed to be an inſtance of uncommon generoſity, an act of complicated virtue; by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the ſtrongeſt provocations, and exerciſed the moſt ardent charity.

Compaſſion was indeed the diſtinguiſhing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakneſs, to attack the defenceleſs, or to preſs upon the falling: whoever was diſtreſſed, was certain at leaſt of his good wiſhes; and when he could give no aſſiſtance to extricate them from misfortunes, he endeavoured to ſooth them by ſympathy and tenderneſs.

But when his heart was not ſoftened by the ſight of miſery, he was ſometimes obſtinate in his reſentment, and did not quickly loſe the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to ſpeak with anger of the inſolence and partiality of Page, and a ſhort time before his death revenged it by a ſatire *.

It is natural to enquire in what terms Mr. Savage ſpoke of this fatal action, when the danger was over, and he was under no neceſſity of uſing any art to ſet his conduct in the faireſt light. He was not willing to dwell upon it; and, if he tranſiently mentioned it, appeared neither to conſider himſelf as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood †.

* Printed in the late collection.

† In one of his letters he ſtyles it "a fatal quarrel, but too well known." Dr. J.

How

How much and how long he regretted it, appeared in a poem which he publifhed many years afterwards. On occafion of a copy of verfes, in which the failings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illuftrate his pofition, that "the beft may fometimes deviate from "virtue," by an inftance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked, that it was no very juft reprefentation of a good man, to fuppofe him liable to drunkennefs, and difpofed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other fupport than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; fources by which he was fometimes very liberally fupplied, and which at other times were fuddenly ftopped; fo that he fpent his life between want and plenty; or, what was yet worfe, between beggary and extravagance; for, as whatever he received was the gift of chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to fquander what he had, becaufe he always hoped to be immediately fupplied.

Another caufe of his profufion was the abfurd kindnefs of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities, by treating him at taverns, and habituating him to pleafures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himfelf, though he purchafed the luxury of a fingle night by the anguifh of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of thefe inconveniences determined him to endeavour after fome fettled income, which, having long found fubmiffion and intreaties fruitlefs, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods.

methods.' He had now, as he acknowledged, loſt that tenderneſs for her, which the whole ſeries of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repreſs, till he found, by the efforts which ſhe made for his deſtruction, that ſhe was not content with refuſing to aſſiſt him, and being neutral in his ſtruggles with poverty, but was ready to ſnatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes; and that ſhe was now to be conſidered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could ſatisfy. He therefore threatened to harraſs her with lampoons, and to publiſh a copious narrative of her conduct, unleſs ſhe conſented to purchaſe an exemption from infamy, by allowing him a penſion.

This expedient proved ſucceſsful. Whether ſhame ſtill ſurvived, though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herſelf, and imagined that ſome of the darts which ſatire might point at her would glance upon them; Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promiſe to lay aſide his deſign of expoſing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow hin a penſion of two hundred pounds a year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life; and for ſome time he had no reaſon to complain of fortune; his appearance was ſplendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance extenſive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and careſſed by all who valued themſelves upon a refined taſte. To admire Mr. Savage, was a proof of diſcernment; and to be acquainted with him, was a title to poetical reputation. His preſence

was

was ſufficient to make any place of publick entertainment popular; and his approbation and example conſtituted the faſhion. So powerful is genius, when it is inveſted with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleaſed when they have an opportunity at once of gratifying their vanity, and practiſing their duty.

This interval of proſperity furniſhed him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its higheſt gradations to its loweſt; and, had he afterwards applied to dramatick poetry, he would perhaps not have had many ſuperiors; for, as he never ſuffered any ſcene to paſs before his eyes without notice, he had treaſured in his mind all the different combinations of paſſions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue, which diſtinguiſh one character from another; and, as his conception was ſtrong, his expreſſions were clear, he eaſily received impreſſions from objects, and very forcibly tranſmitted them to others.

Of his exact obſervations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greateſt names, in a ſmall pamphlet, called *The Author to be let* *, where he introduces Iſcariot Hackney, a proſtitute ſcribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his diſpoſition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many ſecret hiſtories of the petty writers of that time, but ſometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumſtances, or

* Printed in his Works, vol. II. p. 231.

those of their relations; nor can it be denied, that ſome paſſages are ſuch as Iſcariot Hackney might himſelf have produced.

He was accuſed likewiſe of living in an appearance of friendſhip with ſome whom he ſatiriſed, and of making uſe of the confidence which he gained by a ſeeming kindneſs, to diſcover failings and expoſe them: it muſt be confeſſed, that Mr. Savage's eſteem was no very certain poſſeſſion, and that he would lampoon at one time thoſe whom he had praiſed at another.

It may be alleged, that the ſame man may change his principles; and that he, who was once deſervedly commended, may be afterwards ſatiriſed with equal juſtice; or, that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more narrowly, unworthy of the panegyrick which he had too haſtily beſtowed; and that, as a falſe ſatire ought to be recanted, for the ſake of him whoſe reputation may be injured, falſe praiſe ought likewiſe to be obviated, leſt the diſtinction between vice and virtue ſhould be loſt, leſt a bad man ſhould be truſted upon the credit of his encomiaſt, or leſt others ſhould endeavour to obtain the like praiſes by the ſame means.

But though theſe excuſes may be often plauſible, and ſometimes juſt, they are very ſeldom ſatisfactory to mankind; and the writer, who is not conſtant to his ſubject, quickly ſinks into contempt, his ſatire loſes its force, and his panegyrick its value; and he is only conſidered at one time as a flatterer, and as a calumniator at another.

To

To avoid these imputations, it is only necessary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preserve an unvaried regard to truth. For though it is undoubtedly possible that a man, however cautious, may be sometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by false evidences of guilt, such errors will not be frequent; and it will be allowed, that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible, had no man ever said what he did not think, or misled others but when he was himself deceived.

The Author to be let was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a collection of pieces relating to the Dunciad, which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a * dedication which he was prevailed upon to sign, though he did not write it, and in which there are some positions, that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrouled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the "liberties taken by the writers of Journals with "their superiors were exorbitant and unjustifiable," very ill became men, who have themselves not always shewn the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirised those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom. But this is only an instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself: the liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined

* See his Works, vol. II. p. 233.

to

to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborne by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who command, and dangerous and oppressive by those who support it.

Mr. Savage was likewise very far from believing, that the letters annexed to each species of bad poets in the Bathos were, as he was directed to assert, "set "down at random;" for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to such an improbability, he had no other answer to make than that "he did not think of it;" and his friend had too much tenderness to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is false in this dedication, it is proper that I observe the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage asserted; that the account of the circumstances which attended the publication of the Dunciad, however strange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raised Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among those that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was considered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was suspected of supplying with private intelligence and secret incidents: so that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a satirist.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocrify, and that he fometimes fpoke one thing and wrote another, cannot be denied; becaufe he himfelf confeffed, that, when he lived with great familiarity with Dennis, he wrote an epigram* againft him.

Mr. Savage, however, fet all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendfhip of Mr. Pope cheaply purchafed by being expofed to their cenfure and their hatred; nor had he any reafon to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a fteady and unalienable friend almoft to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithftanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he publifhed a panegyrick on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a fum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron, be confidered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a perfon of yet higher rank, and more defirous in appearance of being diftinguifhed as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in converfation mentioned

* This epigram was, I believe, never publifhed.

"Should Dennis publifh you had ftabb'd your brother,
Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother;
Say, what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
On one fo poor you cannot take the law,
On one fo old your fword you fcorn to draw.
Uncag'd then, let the harmlefs monfter rage,
Secure in dulnefs, madnefs, want, and age." Dr. J.

him

him ſometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of thoſe who were always zealous in their aſſertions of the juſtice of the late oppoſition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the court; it was natural to aſk him what could induce him to employ his poetry in praiſe of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppreſſor of his country? He alleged, that he was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was an implicit follower of the miniſtry; and that, being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praiſe of his leader, he had not reſolution ſufficient to ſacrifice the pleaſure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occaſions, he was ready to lament the miſery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had, for three months together, a ſettled habitation, in which he could claim a right of reſidence.

To this unhappy ſtate it is juſt to impute much of the inconſtancy of his conduct; for though a readineſs to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was ſometimes obliged to relax his obſtinacy, and ſubmit his own judgement, and even his virtue, to the government of thoſe by whom he was ſupported: ſo that, if his miſeries were ſometimes the conſequences of his faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compaſſion, becauſe his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period * of his life, while he was surrounded by affluence and pleafure, he publifhed *The Wanderer*, a moral poem, of which the defign is comprifed in thefe lines:

> I fly all publick care, all venal ftrife,
> To try the ftill, compar'd with active, life;
> To prove, by thefe, the fons of men may owe
> The fruits of blifs to burfting clouds of woe;
> That ev'n calamity, by thought refin'd,
> Infpirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more diftinctly in the following paffage:

> By woe, the foul to daring action fwells;
> By woe, in plaintlefs patience it excels:
> From patience, prudent clear experience fprings,
> And traces knowledge through the courfe of things!
> Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, fuccefs,
> Renown:—whate'er men covet and carefs.

This performance was always confidered by himfelf as his mafter-piece; and Mr. Pope, when he afked his opinion of it, told him, that he read it once over, and was not difpleafed with it; that it gave him more pleafure at the fecond perufal, and delighted him ftill more at the third.

It has been generally objected to *The Wanderer*, that the difpofition of the parts is irregular; that the defign is obfcure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, fucceed each other without order; and that the whole performance is not fo much a regular fabrick, as a heap of fhining materials thrown together by accident, which ftrikes rather with the folemn magnificence of a ftupen-

* 1729.

dous

dous ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finiſhed pile.

This criticiſm is univerſal, and therefore it is reaſonable to believe it at leaſt in a great degree juſt; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be miſſed by negligence or ſtupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts diſtinct.

It was never denied to abound with ſtrong repreſentations of nature, and juſt obſervations upon life; and it may eaſily be obſerved, that moſt of his pictures have an evident tendency to illuſtrate his firſt great poſition, "that good is the conſequence of "evil." The ſun that burns up the mountains, fructifies the vales; the deluge that ruſhes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuoſity, is ſeparated into purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impreſſion it had upon his mind.

This muſt be at leaſt acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellences, that this poem can promote no other purpoſes than thoſe of virtue, and that it is written with a very ſtrong ſenſe of the efficacy of religion.

But my province is rather to give the hiſtory of Mr. Savage's performances than to diſplay their beauties, or to obviate the criticiſms which they have occaſioned; and therefore I ſhall not dwell upon the particular paſſages which deſerve applauſe: I ſhall neither ſhew the excellence of his deſcriptions,

nor expatiate on the terrifick portrait of ſüicide, nor point out the artful touches, by which he has diſtinguiſhed the intellectual features of the rebels, who ſuffer death in his laſt canto. It is, however, proper to obſerve, that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the leaſt alluſion to any real perſons or actions.

From a poem ſo diligently laboured, and ſo ſucceſsfully finiſhed, it might be reaſonably expected that he ſhould have gained conſiderable advantage; nor can it, without ſome degree of indignation and concern, be told, that he ſold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two laſt ſheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his abſence intruſted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A ſuperſtitious regard to the correction of his ſheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he often altered, reviſed, recurred to his firſt reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irreſolute without end, as on a queſtion of the laſt importance, and at laſt was ſeldom ſatisfied: the intruſion or omiſſion of a comma was ſufficient to diſcompoſe him, and he would lament an error of a ſingle letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impreſſion of ſome verſes, he remarks, that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, "a ſpell upon him;" and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minuteſt and moſt trifling niceties, deſerved no other name than that of faſcination.

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That he sold so valuable a performance for so small a price, was not to be imputed either to necessity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to submit to very hard conditions; or to avarice, by which the booksellers are frequently incited to oppress that genius by which they are supported; but to that intemperate desire of pleasure, and habitual slavery to his passions, which involved him in many perplexities. He happened at that time to be engaged in the pursuit of some trifling gratification, and, being without money for the present occasion, sold his poem to the first bidder, and perhaps for the first price that was proposed, and would probably have been content with less, if less had been offered him.

This poem was addressed to the Lord Tyrconnel, not only in the first lines, but in a formal dedication filled with the highest strains of panegyrick, and the warmest professions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connexion or elegance of style.

These praises in a short time he found himself inclined to retract, being discarded by the man on whom he had bestowed them, and whom he then immediately discovered not to have deserved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed, that it was the constant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that proposed it,

drink the moſt expenſive wines with great profuſion, and when the reckoning was demanded, to be without money: if, as it often happened, his company were willing to defray his part, the affair ended without any ill conſequences; but if they were refractory, and expected that the wine ſhould be paid for by him that drank it, his method of compoſition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, aſſume the government of the houſe, and order the butler in an imperious manner to ſet the beſt wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the reſpect due to the houſe in which they were entertained, indulged themſelves in the utmoſt extravagance of merriment, practiſed the moſt licentious frolicks, and committed all the outrages of drunkenneſs.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought againſt him: Having given him a collection of valuable books, ſtamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to ſee them in a ſhort time expoſed to ſale upon the ſtalls, it being uſual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a ſmall ſum, to take his books to the pawnbroker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage eaſily credited both theſe accuſations: for having been obliged, from his firſt entrance into the world, to ſubſiſt upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them; and ſo much was he delighted with wine and converſation, and ſo long had he been accuſtomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go to the tavern without ſcruple, and truſt for the reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was

very little known. This conduct indeed very seldom drew upon him those inconveniences that might be feared by any other person; for his conversation was so entertaining, and his address so pleasing, that few thought the pleasure which they received from him dearly purchased, by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happiness, that he scarcely ever found a stranger, whom he did not leave a friend; but it must likewise be added, that he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become a stranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel * quarrelled with him, because he would not subtract from his own luxury and extravagance what he had promised to allow him, and that his resentment was only a plea for the violation of his promise. He asserted, that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that subsistence which he thought not so much a favour, as a debt, since it was offered him upon conditions which he had never broken; and that his only fault was, that he could not be supported with nothing.

He acknowledged, that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to spend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared desirous that he would pass those hours with him, which he so freely bestowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage considered as a censure of his conduct, which he could never patiently bear, and which, in the latter and cooler parts of his life,

* His expression in one of his letters was, "that Lord Tyrconnel had involved his estate, and therefore poorly sought an occasion to quarrel with him." Dr. J.

was

was ſo offenſive to him, that he declared it as his reſolution, "to ſpurn that friend who ſhould pre-"ſume to dictate to him;" and it is not likely, that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmneſs.

He was likewiſe inclined to reſent ſuch expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was neceſſary to the gratification of his paſſions; and declared, that the requeſt was ſtill more unreaſonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was inſupportably diſagreeable. This aſſertion affords another inſtance of that inconſiſtency of his writings with his converſation, which was ſo often to be obſerved. He forgot how laviſhly he had, in his Dedication to *The Wanderer*, extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generoſity, the candour and politeneſs of the man, whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without underſtanding, without good-nature, and without juſtice; of whoſe name he thought himſelf obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings; and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of *The Wanderer* which was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel, he wrote *The Triumph of Health and Mirth*, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languiſhing illneſs. This performance is remarkable, not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth overwhelmed with ſorrow, for the ſickneſs of her favourite, takes a flight in queſt of her ſiſter Health, whom ſhe finds reclined upon the

brow

brow of a lofty mountain, amidſt the fragrance of perpetual ſpring, with the breezes of the morning ſporting about her. Being ſolicited by her ſiſter Mirth, ſhe readily promiſes her aſſiſtance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the ſickneſs of Belinda is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumſtances of his birth and life, the ſplendour of his appearance, and the diſtinction which was for ſome time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, intitled him to familiarity with perſons of higher rank than thoſe to whoſe converſation he had been before admitted; he did not fail to gratify that curioſity, which induced him to take a nearer view of thoſe whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, neceſſarily place at a diſtance from the greateſt part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminiſhed by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the ſplendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themſelves, or only reflected on them by the objects that ſurrounded them; and whether great men were ſelected for high ſtations, or high ſtations made great men.

For this purpoſe he took all opportunities of converſing familiarly with thoſe who were moſt conſpicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looſer moments, and examined their domeſtick behaviour, with that acuteneſs which nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increaſe, and that inquiſitiveneſs which muſt always be

be produced in a vigorous mind, by an absolute freedom from all pressing or domestick engagements.

His discernment was quick, and therefore he soon found in every person, and in every affair, something that deserved attention; he was supported by others, without any care for himself, and was therefore at leisure to pursue his observations.

More circumstances to constitute a critick on human life could not easily concur; nor indeed could any man, who assumed from accidental advantages more praise than he could justly claim from his real merit, admit any acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage; of whom likewise it must be confessed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from passion, or proof against corruption, could not easily find an abler judge, or a warmer advocate.

What was the result of Mr. Savage's enquiry, though he was not much accustomed to conceal his discoveries, it may not be entirely safe to relate, because the persons whose characters he criticised are powerful; and power and resentment are seldom strangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly just, because what he asserted in conversation might, though true in general, be heightened by some momentary ardour of imagination, and, as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly represented; so that the picture at first aggravated, and then unskilfully copied, may be justly suspected to retain no great resemblance of the original.

It may, however, be observed, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of those to whom the administration of affairs, or the conduct

of

of parties, has been intrufted; who have been confidered as the advocates of the crown, or the guardians of the people; and who have obtained the moft implicit confidence, and the loudeft applaufes. Of one particular perfon, who has been at one time fo popular as to be generally efteemed, and at another fo formidable as to be univerfally detefted, he obferved, that his acquifitions had been fmall, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obfcenity to politicks, and from politicks to obfcenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his fpeculations on great characters was now at an end. He was banifhed from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without profpect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was diftinguifhed, he had made no provifion againft a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined but that the feparation muft for fome time have been preceded by coldnefs, peevifhnefs, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the confequence of accumulated provocations on both fides; yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was fudden as a ftroke of thunder; that, though he might have tranfiently fufpected it, he had never fuffered any thought fo unpleafing to fink into his mind, but that he had driven it away by amufements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any meafures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This

This quarrel and ſeparation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was expoſed by them, were ſoon known both to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the luſtre of genius by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compaſſion; for he had not been always careful to uſe the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation which ought to have been with more than uſual caution preſerved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to ſupport him no longer than he endeavoured to preſerve his favour by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheleſs ſet at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be ſought at any great diſtance to prove, that ſuperiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride ſeldom fails to exert itſelf in contempt and inſult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merits of others, it is ſome extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his proſperity was heightened by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a ſenſe of the miſery in which he had ſo long languiſhed, and perhaps of the inſults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himſelf entitled to revenge. It is too common for thoſe who have unjuſtly ſuffered pain, to inflict it likewiſe in their turn with the ſame

injuſtice,

injuſtice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themſelves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune, is generally known; and ſome paſſages of his Introduction to *The Author to be let* ſufficiently ſhew, that he did not wholly refrain from ſuch ſatire, as he afterwards thought very unjuſt when he was expoſed to it himſelf; for, when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a diſtreſſed poet, he very eaſily diſcovered, that diſtreſs was not a proper ſubject for merriment, or topick of invective. He was then able to diſcern that if miſery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be reverenced; if of ill-fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be inſulted, becauſe it is perhaps itſelf a puniſhment adequate to the crime by which it was produced. And the humanity of that man can deſerve no panegyrick, who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But theſe reflections, though they readily occurred to him in the firſt and laſt parts of his life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forgotten; at leaſt they were, like many other maxims, treaſured up in his mind rather for ſhew than uſe, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might ſometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate, them.

His degradation, therefore, from the condition which he had enjoyed with ſuch wanton thoughtleſſneſs, was conſidered by many as an occaſion of triumph. Thoſe who had before paid their court to him without ſucceſs, ſoon returned the contempt which they had ſuffered; and they who had received

favours from him, for of ſuch favours as he could beſtow he was very liberal, did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of reſentment than of gratitude: it is not only to many more pleaſing to recollect thoſe faults which place others below them, than thoſe virtues by which they are themſelves comparatively depreſſed: but it is likewiſe more eaſy to neglect, than to recompenſe; and though there are few who will practiſe a laborious virtue, there will never be wanting multitudes that will indulge in eaſy vice.

Savage, however, was very little diſturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill-fortune brought upon him, from thoſe whom he never eſteemed, and with whom he never conſidered himſelf as leveled by any calamities: and though it was not without ſome uneaſineſs that he ſaw ſome, whoſe friendſhip he valued, change their behaviour; he yet obſerved their coldneſs without much emotion, conſidered them as the ſlaves of fortune and the worſhippers of proſperity, and was more inclined to deſpiſe them, than to lament himſelf.

It does not appear that, after this return of his wants, he found mankind equally favourable to him, as at his firſt appearance in the world. His ſtory, though in reality not leſs melancholy, was leſs affecting, becauſe it was no longer new; it therefore procured him no new friends; and thoſe that had formerly relieved him, thought they might now conſign him to others. He was now likewiſe conſidered by many rather as criminal, than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel, and of his mother, were ſufficiently induſtrious to publiſh his weakneſſes, which were indeed very numerous; and nothing was

for-

forgotten, that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined, that fuch reprefentations of his faults muft make great numbers lefs fenfible of his diftrefs; many, who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no fcruple to propagate the account which they received; many affifted their circulation from malice or revenge; and perhaps many pretended to credit them, that they might with a better grace withdraw their regard, or withhold their affiftance.

Savage, however, was not one of thofe who fuffered himfelf to be injured without refiftance, nor was lefs diligent in expofing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at leaft this advantage, that he drove him firft to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was fo much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants, that did no honour to his courage, to beat him at a coffee-houfe. But it happened that he had left the place a few minutes; and his lordfhip had, without danger, the pleafure of boafting how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to repay his vifit at his own houfe; but was prevailed on, by his domefticks, to retire without infifting upon feeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accufed by Mr. Savage of fome actions, which fcarcely any provocation will be thought fufficient to juftify; fuch as feizing what he had in his lodgings, and other inftances of wanton cruelty, by which he increafed the diftrefs of Savage, without any advantage to himfelf.

These mutual accuſations were retorted on both ſides, for many years, with the utmoſt degree of virulence and rage; and time ſeemed rather to augment than diminiſh their reſentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage ſhould be kept alive, is not ſtrange becauſe he felt every day the conſequences of the quarrel; but it might reaſonably have been hoped, that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length have forgot thoſe provocations, which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The ſpirit of Mr. Savage indeed never ſuffered him to ſolicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and inſult for inſult; his ſuperiority of wit ſupplied the diſadvantages of his fortune, and enabled him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be ſome gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his neceſſities; and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardſhips, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear miſery with fortitude, than enjoy proſperity with moderation.

He now thought himſelf again at liberty to expoſe the cruelty of his mother; and therefore, I believe, about this time, publiſhed *The Baſtard*, a poem remarkable for the vivacious ſallies of thought in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of baſe birth; and the pathetick ſentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he ſuffered by the crime of his parents.

The

The vigour and ſpirit of the verſes, the peculiar circumſtances of the author, the novelty of the ſubject, and the notoriety of the ſtory to which the alluſions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately diſperſed, and editions were multiplied with unuſual rapidity.

One circumſtance attended the publication which Savage uſed to relate with great ſatisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was with "due reverence" inſcribed, happened then to be at Bath, where ſhe could not conveniently retire from cenſure, or conceal herſelf from obſervation; and no ſooner did the reputation of the poem begin to ſpread, than ſhe heard it repeated in all places of concourſe, nor could ſhe enter the aſſembly-rooms, or croſs the walks, withont being ſaluted with ſome lines from *The Baſtard*.

This was perhaps the firſt time that ſhe ever diſcovered a ſenſe of ſhame, and on this occaſion the power of wit was very conſpicuous; the wretch who had, without ſcruple, proclaimed herſelf an adultereſs, and who had firſt endeavoured to ſtarve her ſon, then to tranſport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the repreſentation of her own conduct; but fled from reproach, though ſhe felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath in the utmoſt haſte, to ſhelter herſelf among the crowds of London.

Thus Savage had the ſatisfaction of finding, that, though he could not reform his mother, he could puniſh her, and that he did not always ſuffer alone.

The pleaſure which he received from this increaſe of his poetical reputation, was ſufficient for ſome time to overbalance the miſeries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate; for it was ſold for a very trivial ſum to a bookſeller, who, though the ſucceſs was ſo uncommon that five impreſſions were ſold, of which many were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generoſity ſufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The ſale of this poem was always mentioned by Mr. Savage with the utmoſt elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an inconteſtible proof of a general acknowledgement of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could juſtly boaſt a general reception.

But, though he did not loſe the opportunity which ſucceſs gave him of ſetting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the ſuffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not ſuffer his eſteem of himſelf to depend upon others, nor found any thing ſacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to cenſure him; he then readily ſhewed the folly of expecting that the publick ſhould judge right, obſerved how ſlowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himſelf with the applauſe of men of judgement, and was ſomewhat diſpoſed to exclude all thoſe from the character of men of judgement who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind than to think them blind to the beauties of his works, and imputed the ſlowneſs of their ſale to other

caufes ; either they were publifhed at a time when the town was empty, or when the attention of the publick was engroffed by fome ftruggle in the parliament, or fome other object of general concern ; or they were by the neglect of the publifher not diligently difperfed, or by his avarice not advertifed with fufficient frequency. Addrefs, or induftry, or liberality, was always wanting ; and the blame was laid rather on any perfon than the author.

By arts like thefe, arts which every man practifes in fome degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be afcribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himfelf. Had he indeed only made ufe of thefe expedients to alleviate the lofs or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages which it is not in a man's power to beftow upon himfelf, they might have been juftly mentioned as inftances of a philofophical mind, and very properly propofed to the imitation of multitudes, who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the fame dexterity, languifh under afflictions which might be eafily removed.

It were doubtlefs to be wifhed, that truth and reafon were univerfally prevalent ; that every thing were efteemed according to its real value ; and that men would fecure themfelves from being difappointed, in their endeavours after happinefs, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained ; but, if adventitious and foreign pleafures muft be purfued, it would be perhaps of fome benefit, fince that purfuit muft frequently be fruitlefs, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleaſing intoxication muſt not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having obſerved the life of Savage, need to be cautioned againſt it. By imputing none of his miſeries to himſelf, he continued to act upon the ſame principles, and to follow the ſame path; was never made wiſer by his ſufferings, nor preſerved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the ſame ſteps on the ſame circle; always applauding his paſt conduct, or at leaſt forgetting it, to amuſe himſelf with phantoms of happineſs, which were dancing before him; and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reaſon, when it would have diſcovered the illuſion, and ſhewn him, what he never wiſhed to ſee, his real ſtate.

He is even accuſed, after having lulled his imagination with thoſe ideal opiates, of having tried the ſame experiment upon his conſcience; and, having accuſtomed himſelf to impute all deviations from the right to foreign cauſes, it is certain that he was upon every occaſion too eaſily reconciled to himſelf; and that he appeared very little to regret thoſe practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he miſtook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not ſo much a good man, as the friend of goodneſs.

This at leaſt muſt be allowed him, that he always preſerved a ſtrong ſenſe of the dignity, the beauty, and the neceſſity, of virtue; and that he never contributed deliberately to ſpread corruption amongſt mankind. His actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his writings, being

ing the productions of ftudy, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

Thefe writings may improve mankind, when his failings fhall be forgotten; and therefore he muft be confidered, upon the whole, as a benefactor to the world;, nor can his perfonal example do any hurt, fince, whoever hears of his faults will hear of the miferies which they brought upon him, and which would deferve lefs pity, had not his condition been fuch as made his faults pardonable. He may be confidered as a child expofed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when refolution was not yet ftrengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumftance which, in his *Baftard*, he laments in a very affecting manner:

——No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice reftrain'd.

The Baftard, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compaffion, fo that he was ftill under the fame want of the neceffaries of life; and he therefore exerted all the intereft which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes, could procure, to obtain, upon the death of Eufden, the place of Poet Laureat, and profecuted his application with fo much diligence, that the King publickly declared it his intention to beftow it upon him; but fuch was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was difappointed in his fchemes; for the Lord

Chamberlain, who has the diſpoſal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the King's deſign, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an encroachment upon his rights, and therefore beſtowed the laurel upon Colley Cibber.

Mr. Savage, thus diſappointed, took a reſolution of applying to the Queen, that, having once given him life, ſhe would enable him to ſupport it, and therefore publiſhed a ſhort poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the odd title of "Volunteer Laureat." The event of this eſſay he has himſelf related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he afterwards reprinted it in "The Gentleman's "Magazine," whence I have copied it entire, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage ſucceeded.

"Mr. Urban,

"In your Magazine for February you publiſhed "the laſt 'Volunteer Laureat,' written on a very "melancholy occaſion, the death of the royal pa-"troneſs of arts and literature in general, and of the "author of that poem in particular; I now ſend you "the firſt that Mr. Savage wrote under that title.— "This gentleman, notwithſtanding a very conſiderable "intereſt, being, on the death of Mr. Euſden, diſap-"pointed of the Laureat's place, wrote the following "verſes; which were no ſooner publiſhed, but the "late Queen ſent to a bookſeller for them. The "author had not at that time a friend either to get "him introduced, or his poem preſented at Court; "yet, ſuch was the unſpeakable goodneſs of that

"Princeſs,

"Princess, that, notwithstanding this act of ceremony was wanting, in a few days after publication, Mr. Savage received a Bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a gracious message from her Majesty, by the Lord North and Guilford, to this effect: 'That her Majesty was highly pleased with the verses; that she took particularly kind his lines there relating to the King; that he had permission to write annually on the same subject; and that he should yearly receive the like present, till something better (which was her Majesty's intention) could be done for him.' After this he was permitted to present one of his annual poems to her Majesty, had the honour of kissing her hand, and met with the most gracious reception.

"Yours, &c."

Such was the performance *, and such its reception; a reception, which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the highest degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyrick, shewed in the Queen too much desire of hearing her own praises, and a greater regard to herself than to him on whom her bounty was conferred. It was a kind of avaricious generosity, by which flattery was rather purchased than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the same allowance with much more heroick intention: she had no other view than to enable him to prosecute his studies, and to set himself above the want of assist-

* This poem is inserted in the late collection.

ance,

ance, and was contented with doing good without ſtipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage, however, was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was raviſhed with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with thoſe which he was promiſed: he conſidered himſelf now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would eſtabliſh him in ſome profitable employment.

He therefore aſſumed the title of "Volunteer Lau-"reat," not without ſome reprehenſions from Cibber, who informed him, that the title of "Laureat" was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to beſtow upon himſelf; and added, that he might with equal propriety ſtyle himſelf a Volunteer Lord or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was juſt; but Savage did not think any title, which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber, ſo honourable as that the uſurpation of it could be imputed to him as an inſtance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the ſame title, and received every year the ſame reward.

He did not appear to conſider theſe encomiums as teſts of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promiſe, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was entitled to his penſion, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for ſome of the laſt years he regularly inſerted them in "The Gentleman's Ma-

"gazine," by which they were difperfed over the kingdom.

Of fome of them he had himfelf fo low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems, for which he printed propofals, and folicited fubfcriptions; nor can it feem ftrange, that, being confined to the fame fubject, he fhould be at fome times indolent, and at others unfuccefsful; that he fhould fometimes delay a difagreeable tafk till it was too late to perform it well; or that he fhould fometimes repeat the fame fentiment on the fame occafion, or at others be mifled by an attempt after novelty to forced conceptions and far-fetched images.

He wrote indeed with a double intention, which fupplied him with fome variety; for his bufinefs was to praife the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of thofe which fhe had promifed: in fome of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in fome difcontent; in fome, he reprefents himfelf as happy in her patronage; and, in others, as difconfolate to find himfelf neglected.

Her promife, like other promifes made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took fufficient care that it fhould not be forgotten. The publication of his "Volunteer Laureat" procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not fo depreffed by his difappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his intereft. When the Princefs Anne was married,

married, he wrote a poem * upon her departure, only, as he declared, " becaufe it was expected from him," and he was not willing to bar his own profpects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it; and therefore it is likely that it was confidered at court, as an act of duty, to which he was obliged by his dependence, and which it was therefore not neceffary to reward by any new favour: or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it fuperfluous to lavifh prefents upon a man whom fhe intended to eftablifh for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being fruftrated, but his penfion likewife of being obftructed, by an accidental calumny. The writer of " The Daily Courant," a paper then publifhed under the direction of the miniftry, charged him with a crime, which, though very great in itfelf, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very juftly have incenfed the Queen againft him. He was accufed by name of influencing elections againft the court, by appearing at the head of a tory mob; nor did the accufer fail to aggravate his crime, by reprefenting it as the effect of the moft atrocious ingratitude, and a kind of rebellion againft the Queen, who had firft preferved him from an infamous death, and afterwards diftinguifhed him by her favour, and fupported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewife by good fortune very particular. The place of the

* Printed in the late Collection.

transaction was mentioned, and the whole series of the rioter's conduct related. This exactness made Mr. Savage's vindication easy; for he never had in his life seen the place which was declared to be the scene of his wickedness, nor ever had been present in any town when its representatives were chosen. This answer he therefore made haste to publish, with all the circumstances necessary to make it credible; and very reasonably demanded, that the accusation should be retracted in the same paper, that he might no longer suffer the imputation of sedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewise pressed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who, either trusting to the protection of those whose defence he had undertaken, or having entertained some personal malice against Mr. Savage, or fearing lest, by retracting so confident an assertion, he should impair the credit of his paper, refused to give him that satisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it necessary, to his own vindication, to prosecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accusation, having sufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge; and therefore willingly dropped it.

He saw soon afterwards a process commenced in the same court against himself, on an information in which he was accused of writing and publishing an obscene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's desire to be distinguished; and, when any controversy became popular, he never wanted some reason for engaging in it with

with great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had chofen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no fooner taken his fide, and informed himfelf of the chief topicks of the difpute, than he took all opportunities of afferting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own intereft, or any other vifible defign than that of drawing upon himfelf the attention of mankind.

The difpute between the Bifhop of London and the chancellor is well known to have been for fome time the chief topick of political converfation; and therefore Mr. Savage, in purfuance of his character, endeavoured to become confpicuous among the controvertifts with which every coffee-houfe was filled on that occafion. He was an indefatigable oppofer of all the claims of ecclefiaftical power, though he did not know on what they were founded; and was therefore no friend to the Bifhop of London. But he had another reafon for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle; for he was the friend of Mr. Fofter and Mr. Thomfon, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his intereft in the queftion, which, however, as he imagined, concerned him fo nearly, that it was not fufficient to harangue and difpute, but neceffary likewife to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new poem, called by him, "The Progrefs of a Divine;" in which he conducts a profligate prieft, by all the gradations of wickednefs, from a poor curacy in the country to the higheft preferments of the Church; and defcribes, with that humour which was natural to

him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diverſities of human life, his behaviour in every ſtation; and inſinuates, that this prieſt, thus accompliſhed, found at laſt a patron in the Biſhop of London.

When he was aſked, by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the Biſhop with ſuch an action; he had no more to ſay than that he had only inverted the accuſation; and that he thought it reaſonable to believe, that he who obſtructed the riſe of a good man without reaſon, would for bad reaſons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were univerſally provoked by this ſatire; and Savage, who, as was his conſtant practice, had ſet his name to his performance, was cenſured in "The Weekly Miſcellany *" with ſeverity, which he did not ſeem inclined to forget.

But

* A ſhort ſatire was likewiſe publiſhed in the ſame paper, in which were the following lines:

"For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death,
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he ſpent his future years
In prayer, and faſting, and repentant tears.
—But, O vain hope!—the truely Savage cries,
"Prieſts, and their ſlaviſh doctrines, I deſpiſe.
"Shall I——
"Who, by free-thinking to free action fir'd,
"In midnight brawls a deathleſs name acquir'd,
"Now ſtoop to learn of eccleſiaſtic men?—
"—No, arm'd with rhyme, at prieſts I'll take my aim,
"Though prudence bids me murder but their fame.

"WEEKLY MISCELLANY."

An

But return of invective was not thought a ſufficient puniſhment. The Court of King's Bench was therefore moved againſt him; and he was obliged to return an anſwer to a charge of obſcenity. It was urged, in his defence, that obſcenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice; but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obſcene

An anſwer was publiſhed in "The Gentleman's Magazine," written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are ſelected:

"Transform'd by thoughtleſs rage, and midnight wine,
From malice free, and puſh'd without deſign;
In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thruſt,
And brought the youth a victim to the duſt;
So ſtrong the hand of accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.
Inſtead of waſting "all thy future years,
"Savage, in prayer and vain repentant tears,"
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the prieſt, and ſink his high-church rage;
To ſhew what frauds the holy veſtments hide,
The neſts of av'rice, luſt, and pedant pride:
Then change the ſcene, let merit brightly ſhine,
And round the patriot twiſt the wreath divine;
The heav'nly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays tranſmit a Foſter's name;
Touch ev'ry paſſion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.
Thus future times ſhall royal grace extol;
Thus poliſh'd lines thy preſent fame enrol.
——But grant——
——Maliciouſly that Savage plung'd the ſteel,
And made the youth its ſhining vengeance feel;
My ſoul abhors the act, the man deteſts,
But more the bigotry of prieſtly breaſts."

Gentleman's Magazine, May, 1735. Dr. J.

ideas,

ideas, with the view of expofing them to deteftation, and of amending the age by fhewing the deformity of wickednefs. This plea was admitted; and Sir Philip Yorke, who then prefided in that court, difmiffed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings. The profecution, however, anfwered in fome meafure the purpofe of thofe by whom it was fet on foot; for Mr. Savage was fo far intimidated by it, that, when the edition of his poem was fold, he did not venture to reprint it; fo that it was in a fhort time forgotten, or forgotten by all but thofe whom it offended.

It is faid that fome endeavours were ufed to incenfe the Queen againft him: but he found advocates to obviate at leaft part of their effect; for, though he was never advanced, he ftill continued to receive his penfion.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life; and, as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to fecure his memory from reproach, by informing thofe whom he made his enemies, that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though whenever he thought he had any reafon to complain of the clergy, he ufed to threaten them with a new edition of "The Progrefs of a Divine," it was his calm and fettled refolution to fupprefs it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injuftice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem called "The "Progrefs of a Free-thinker," whom he intended to

lead through all the ftages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickednefs, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modifh fophiftry ufed for that purpofe; and at laft to difmifs him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this defign is a real lofs to mankind; for he was too well acquainted with all the fcenes of debauchery to have failed in his reprefentations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have reprefented them in fuch a manner as fhould expofe them either to ridicule or deteftation.

But this plan was like others, formed and laid afide, till the vigour of his imagination was fpent, and the effervefcence of invention had fubfided; but foon gave way to fome other defign, which pleafed by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was ftill in his ufual exigencies, having no certain fupport but the penfion allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact œconomift from want, was very far from being fufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accuftomed to difmifs any of his appetites without the gratification which they folicited, and whom nothing but want of money withheld from partaking of every pleafure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his penfion was very particular. No fooner had he changed the bill, than he vanifhed from the fight of all his acquaintance, and lay for fome time out of the reach of all the enquiries that friendfhip or curiofity could make after him. At length he appeared again pennylefs as

 before,

before, but never informed even thofe whom he feemed to regard moft where he had been; nor was his retreat ever difcovered.

This was his conftant practice during the whole time that he received the penfion from the Queen: he regularly difappeared and returned. He, indeed, affirmed that he retired to ftudy, and that the money fupported him in folitude for many months; but his friends declared, that the fhort time in which it was fpent fufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politenefs and his wit ftill raifed him friends, who were defirous of fetting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppreffed; and therefore folicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with fo much earneftnefs, that they obtained a promife of the next place that fhould become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a year. This promife was made with an uncommon declaration, "that it was not the promife "of a minifter to a petitioner, but of a friend to his "friend."

Mr. Savage now concluded himfelf fet at eafe for ever, and, as he obferves in a poem written on that incident of his life, trufted and was trufted; but foon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promife was not inviolable. He fpent a long time in folicitations, and at laft defpaired and defifted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the minifter fome reafon to believe that he fhould not ftrengthen his own intereft by advancing him, for he had taken care to diftinguifh himfelf in coffee-houfes

as an advocate for the miniſtry of the laſt years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to juſtify the conduct, and exalt the character, of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an Epiſtle upon Authors, which he wrote about that time, but was too wiſe to publiſh, and of which only ſome fragments have appeared, inſerted by him in the "Magazine" after his retirement.

To deſpair was not, however, the character of Savage; when one patronage failed, he had recourſe to another. The Prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of ſome writers whom Mr. Savage did not think ſuperior to himſelf, and therefore he reſolved to addreſs a poem to him.

For this purpoſe he made choice of a ſubject which could regard only perſons of the higheſt rank and greateſt affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for ſome time to Richmond, that he might proſecute his deſign in full tranquillity, without the temptations of pleaſure, or the ſolicitations of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being diſconcerted, he produced a poem "On Publick Spirit, with regard "to Publick Works."

The plan of this poem is very extenſive, and compriſes a multitude of topicks, each of which might furniſh matter ſufficient for a long performance, and of which ſome have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own deſign, and was writing to obtain a ſupply of wants too preſſing to admit

admit of long or accurate enquiries, he paſſes negligently over many publick works, which, even in his own opinion, deſerved to be more elaborately treated.

But, though he may ſometimes diſappoint his reader by tranſient touches upon theſe ſubjects, which have often been conſidered, and therefore naturally raiſe expectations, he muſt be allowed amply to compenſate his omiſſions, by expatiating, in the concluſion of his work, upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more ſuſceptible of embelliſhments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the paſſions, than many of thoſe which have hitherto been thought moſt worthy of the ornament of verſe. The ſettlement of colonies in uninhabited countries, the eſtabliſhment of thoſe in ſecurity, whoſe misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleaſing or ſafe, the acquiſition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waſte and luxuriant bounties of nature, and the enjoyment of thoſe gifts which Heaven has ſcattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be conſidered without giving riſe to a great number of pleaſing ideas, and bewildering the imagination in delightful proſpects; and, therefore, whatever ſpeculations they may produce in thoſe who have confined themſelves to political ſtudies, naturally fixed the attention, and excited the applauſe, of a poet. The politician, when he conſiders men driven into other countries for ſhelter, and obliged to retire to foreſts and deſerts, and paſs their lives, and fix their poſterity, in the remoteſt corners of the world, to avoid thoſe hard-

ſhips which they ſuffer or fear in their native place, may very properly enquire, why the legiſlature does not provide a remedy for theſe miſeries, rather than encourage an eſcape from them. He may conclude that the flight of every honeſt man is a loſs to the community; that thoſe who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved; and the life, which is overburthened by accidental calamities, ſet at eaſe by the care of the publick; and that thoſe, who have by miſconduct forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made uſeful to the ſociety which they have injured, than be driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleaſing undertaking than that of propoſing laws which, however juſt or expedient, will never be made; or endeavouring to reduce to rational ſchemes of government ſocieties which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private paſſions of thoſe who preſide in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive, from want and perſecution, to plenty, quiet, and ſecurity, and ſeats him in ſcenes of peaceful ſolitude, and undiſturbed repoſe.

Savage has not forgotten, amidſt the pleaſing ſentiments which this proſpect of retirement ſuggeſted to him, to cenſure thoſe crimes which have been generally committed by the diſcoverers of new regions, and to expoſe the enormous wickedneſs of making war upon barbarous nations becauſe they cannot reſiſt, and of invading countries becauſe they are fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of viſiting diſtant lands only to lay them waſte. He has aſſerted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs that pride

which

which inclines men to imagine that right is the consequence of power.

His description of the various miseries which force men to seek for refuge in distant countries, affords another instance of his proficiency in the important and extensive study of human life; and the tenderness with which he recounts them, another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is observable that the close of this poem discovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and published in his Miscellanies, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow prospects of the middle state of life, and declares his resolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the shrub; but, in this poem though addressed to a prince, he mentions this state of life as comprizing those who ought most to attract reward, those who merit most the confidence of power, and the familiarity of greatness; and, accidentally mentioning this passage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that state.

In describing villas and gardens, he did not omit to condemn that absurd custom, which prevails among the English, of permitting servants to receive money from strangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inserted in his poem these lines:

> But what the flow'ring pride of gardens rare,
> However royal, or however fair,
> If gates, which to access should still give way,
> Ope but, like Peter's paradise, for pay;

If perquisited varlets frequent ſtand,
And each new walk muſt a new tax demand;
What foreign eye but with contempt ſurveys?
What Muſe ſhall from oblivion ſnatch their praiſe?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected, that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmoud to be ſhewn for money; and that ſhe ſo openly countenanced the practice, that ſhe had beſtowed the privilege of ſhewing them as a place of profit on a man, whoſe merit ſhe valued herſelf upon rewarding, though ſhe gave him only the liberty of diſgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of theſe lines might be officiouſly repreſented as an inſult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his ſubſiſtence; and that the propriety of his obſervation would be no ſecurity againſt the cenſures which the unſeaſonableneſs of it might draw upon him; he therefore ſuppreſſed the paſſage in the firſt edition, but after the Queen's death thought the ſame caution no longer neceſſary, and reſtored it to the proper place.

The poem was, therefore, publiſhed without any political faults, and inſcribed to the Prince; but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to preſent it to him, had no other method of attracting his obſervation than the publication of frequent advertiſements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occaſions.

This diſappointment he never mentioned without indigna-

indignation, being by ſome means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his addreſs to him; and inſinuated, that if any advances in popularity could have been made by diſtinguiſhing him, he had not written without notice, or without reward.

He was once inclined to have preſented his poem in perſon, and ſent to the printer for a copy with that deſign; but either his opinion changed, or his reſolution deſerted him, and he continued to reſent neglect without attempting to force himſelf into regard.

Nor was the publick much more favourable than his patron; for only ſeventy-two were ſold, though the performance was much commended by ſome whoſe judgement in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage eaſily reconciled himſelf to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by obſerving that his poem was unluckily publiſhed two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by conſequence at a time when all thoſe who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their diſmiſſion from publick affairs.

It muſt be however allowed, in juſtification of the publick, that this performance is not the moſt excellent of Mr. Savage's works; and that, though it cannot be denied to contain many ſtriking ſentiments, majeſtick lines, and juſt obſervations, it is in general not ſufficiently poliſhed in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digeſted in the plan.

Thus

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was ſuch as very few could have ſupported with equal patience; but to which, it muſt likewiſe be confeſſed, that few would have been expoſed who received punctually fifty pounds a year; a ſalary which, though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found ſufficient to ſupport families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the neceſſities of life require.

But no ſooner had he received his penſion, than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a ſhort time to his former diſtreſs, and for ſome part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances, from which the meanneſs of his dreſs often excluded him, when the politeneſs and variety of his converſation would have been thought a ſufficient recompence for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and paſſed the night ſometimes in mean houſes, which are ſet open at night to any caſual wanderers, ſometimes in cellars, among the riot and filth of the meaneſt and moſt profligate of the rabble; and ſometimes, when he had not money to ſupport even the expences of theſe receptacles, walked about the ſtreets till he was weary, and lay down in the ſummer upon the bulk, or in the winter, with his aſſociates in poverty, among the aſhes of a glaſs-houſe.

In this manner were paſſed thoſe days and thoſe nights which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated ſpeculations, uſeful ſtudies, or pleaſing

pleaſing converſation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glaſs-houſe, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of *The Wanderer*, the man of exalted ſentiments, extenſive views, and curious obſervations; the man whoſe remarks on life might have aſſiſted the ſtateſman, whoſe ideas of virtue might have enlightend the moraliſt, whoſe eloquence might have influenced ſenates, and whoſe delicacy might have poliſhed courts.

It cannot but be imagined that ſuch neceſſities might ſometimes force him upon diſreputable practices; and it is probable that theſe lines in *The Wanderer* were occaſioned by his reflections on his own conduct:

> Though miſery leads to happineſs, and truth,
> Unequal to the load this languid youth,
> (O, let none cenſure, if, untried by grief,
> If, amidſt woe, untempted by relief),
> He ſtoop'd reluctant to low arts of ſhame,
> Which then, ev'n then, he ſcorn'd, and bluſh'd to name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be ſolicited for ſmall ſums, which the frequency of the requeſt made in time conſiderable; and he was therefore quickly ſhunned by thoſe who were become familiar enough to be truſted with his neceſſities; but his rambling manner of life, and conſtant appearance at houſes of publick reſort, always procured him a new ſucceſſion of friends, whoſe kindneſs had not been exhauſted by repeated requeſts; ſo that he was ſeldom abſolutely without reſources, but had in his utmoſt exigencies this comfort, that he always imagined himſelf ſure of ſpeedy relief.

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It was obſerved, that he always aſked favours of this kind without the leaſt ſubmiſſion or apparent conſciouſneſs of dependence, and that he did not ſeem to look upon a compliance with his requeſt as an obligation that deſerved any extraordinary acknowledgements; but a refuſal was reſented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor did he readily reconcile himſelf to thoſe who either denied to lend, or gave him afterwards any intimation that they expected to be repaid.

He was ſometimes ſo far compaſſionated by thoſe who knew both his merit and diſtreſſes, that they received him into their families, but they ſoon diſcovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for, being always accuſtomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himſelf to any ſtated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his converſation till midnight, without conſidering that buſineſs might require his friend's application in the morning; and, when he had perſuaded himſelf to retire to bed, was not, without equal difficulty, called up to dinner; it was therefore impoſſible to pay him any diſtinction without the entire ſubverſion of all œconomy, a kind of eſtabliſhment which, wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It muſt, therefore, be acknowledged, in juſtification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldneſs of his friends that Savage was diſtreſſed, but becauſe it was in reality very difficult to preſerve him long in a ſtate of eaſe. To ſupply him with money was a hopeleſs attempt; for no ſooner did he ſee himſelf maſter of a ſum ſufficient to ſet him

him free from care for a day, than he became profuſe and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a ſcheme of pleaſure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to ſome new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amuſements and jollity; wherever Savage entered, he immediately expected that order and buſineſs ſhould fly before him, that all ſhould thence-forward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domeſtick management ſhould be oppoſed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His diſtreſſes, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his loweſt ſtate he wanted not ſpirit to aſſert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repreſs that inſolence which the ſuperiority of fortune incited, and to trample on that reputation which roſe upon any other baſis than that of merit: he never admitted any groſs familiarities, or ſubmitted to be treated otherwiſe than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or clothes, one of his friends, a man indeed not remarkable for moderation in his proſperity, left a meſſage, that he deſired to ſee him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to aſſiſt him; but was very much diſguſted that he ſhould preſume to preſcribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refuſed to viſit him, and rejected his kindneſs.

The ſame invincible temper, whether firmneſs or obſtinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded, that the allowance which was once paid him ſhould be reſtored; but with whom he never appeared to

entertain

entertain for a moment the thought of foliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtinefs of fuperiority, and all the bitternefs of refentment. He wrote to him, not in a ftyle of fupplication or refpect, but of reproach, menace, and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conqueft.

As many more can difcover that a man is richer than that he is wifer than themfelves, fuperiority of underftanding is not fo readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is that haughtinefs, which the confcioufnefs of great abilities incites, borne with the fame fubmiffion as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by afferting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating thofe with contempt, whom better fortune animated to rebel againft him, did not fail to raife a great number of enemies in the different claffes of mankind. Thofe who thought themfelves raifed above him by the advantages of riches, hated him becaufe they found no protection from the petulance of his wit. Thofe who were efteemed for their writings feared him as a critick, and maligned him as a rival, and almoft all the fmaller wits were his profeffed enemies.

Among thefe Mr. Miller fo far indulged his refentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be perfonated on the ftage, in a drefs like that which he then wore; a mean infult, which only infinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore defpifed by him rather than refented; for, though he wrote a lampoon againft Miller, he never printed it: and as no other perfon ought to

profecute

profecute that revenge from which the perfon who was injured defifted, I fhall not preferve what Mr. Savage fuppreffed; of which the publication would indeed have been a punifhment too fevere for fo impotent an affault.

The great hardfhips of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained that, as his affairs grew defperate, he found his reputation for capacity vifibly decline; that his opinion in queftions of criticifm was no longer regarded when his coat was out of fafhion; and that thofe who, in the interval of his profperity, were always encouraging him to great undertakings by encomiums on his genius and affurances of fuccefs, now received any mention of his defigns with coldnefs, thought that the fubjects on which he propofed to write were very difficult, and were ready to inform him, that the event of a poem was uncertain, that an author ought to employ much time in the confideration of his plan, and not prefume to fit down to write in confequence of a few curfory ideas, and a fuperficial knowledge; difficulties were ftarted on all fides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but "The Volunteer Laureat."

Yet even this kind of contempt never depreffed him; for he always preferved a fteady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he fhould at any time earneftly endeavour to attain. He formed fchemes of the fame kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himfelf with advances to be made in fcience, as with riches, to be enjoyed in fome diftant period

of

of his life. For the acquisition of knowledge he was indeed much better qualified than for that of riches; for he was naturally inquisitive, and desirous of the conversation of those from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means solicitous to improve those opportunities that were sometimes offered of raising his fortune; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which, when once he was in possession of them, rarely forsook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would some time recollect her promise, he had recourse to the usual practice of writers, and published proposals for printing his works by subscription, to which he was encouraged by the success of many who had not a better right to the favour of the publick; but, whatever was the reason, he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him; and he observed, with some discontent, that, though he offered his works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a small number in comparison with those who subscribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he saw his proposals neglected by the Queen, who patronised Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition, among those who attended the court, who should most promote his interest, and who should first offer a subscription. This was a distinction to which Mr. Savage made no scruple of asserting, that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius, gave a fairer title, than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's

Savage's applications were, however, not universally unsuccessful; for some of the nobility countenanced his design, encouraged his proposals, and subscribed with great liberality. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that, upon receiving his proposals, he sent him ten guineas.

But the money which his subscriptions afforded him was not less volatile than that which he received from his other schemes; whenever a subscription was paid him, he went to a tavern; and, as money so collected is necessarily received in small sums, he never was able to send his poems to the press, but for many years continued his solicitation, and squandered whatever he obtained.

The project of printing his works was frequently revived; and, as his proposals grew obsolete, new ones were printed with fresher dates. To form schemes for the publication, was one of his favourite amusements; nor was he ever more at ease than when, with any friend who readily fell-in with his schemes, he was adjusting the print, forming the advertisements, and regulating the dispersion of his new edition, which he really intended some time to publish, and which, as long as experience had shewn him the impossibility of printing the volume together, he at last determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the first might supply the expences of the next.

Thus he spent his time in mean expedients and tormenting suspence, living for the greatest part in fear of prosecutions from his creditors, and consequently skulking in obscure parts of the town, of which he was no stranger to the remotest corners.

But wherever he came, his addreſs ſecured him friends, whom his neceſſities ſoon alienated; ſo that he had, perhaps, a more numerous acquaintance than any man ever before attained, there being ſcarcely any perſon eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whoſe character he was not in ſome degree able to delineate.

To the acquiſition of this extenſive acquaintance every circumſtance of his life contributed. He excelled in the arts of converſation, and therefore willingly practiſed them. He had ſeldom any home, or even a lodging in which he could be private; and therefore was driven into publick-houſes for the common conveniences of life and ſupports of nature. He was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to withhold him, and, often no money to provide for himſelf; and by dining with one company, he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus diſſipated was his life, and thus caſual his ſubſiſtence; yet did not the diſtraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition depreſs his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he ſometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in ſtudy, to amuſe it with pleaſing imaginations; and ſeldom appeared to be melancholy, but when ſome ſudden misfortune had juſt fallen upon him, and even then in a few moments he would diſentangle himſelf from his perplexity, adopt the ſubject of converſation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others preſented to it.

This

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered, in 1738, with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the profpects of preferment with which he fo long entertained his imagination; and, as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reafon to believe that he never intended the performance of his promife, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was, however, at that time, fupported by a friend; and as it was not his cuftom to look out for diftant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itfelf upon his fenfes, he was not much afflicted at his lofs, and perhaps comforted himfelf that his penfion would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyrick.

Another expectation contributed likewife to fupport him; he had taken a refolution to write a fecond tragedy upon the ftory of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preferved a few lines of his former play, but made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; fo that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another fubject; but, in vindication of himfelf, he afferted, that it was not eafy to find a better; and that he thought it his intereft to extinguifh the memory of the firft tragedy, which he could only do by writing one lefs defective upon the fame ftory; by which he fhould entirely defeat the artifice of the bookfellers, who, after the death of any author of reputation, are always induftrious to fwell his works, by uniting his worft productions with his beft.

In the execution of this ſcheme, however, he proceeded but ſlowly, and probably only employed himſelf upon it when he could find no other amuſement; but he pleaſed himſelf with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined, that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire, would be equivalent to all that he had loſt by the death of his patroneſs.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the meaſures proper to ſecure the continuance of his penſion, though ſome of his favourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year, he gave a proof of the ſolidity of his judgement, and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been ſo long beaten, that it was impoſſible to travel in it without treading in the footſteps of thoſe who had gone before him; and that therefore it was neceſſary, that he might diſtinguiſh himſelf from the herd of encomiaſts, to find out ſome new walk of funeral panegyrick.

This difficult taſk he performed in ſuch a manner, that his poem may be juſtly ranked among the beſt pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topicks, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view, but which he has united in ſuch a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be juſtly ſaid, that what no other man would have thought on, it now appears ſcarcely poſſible for any man to miſs.

The

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is ſo maſterly, that it is ſufficient to ſet this poem above cenſure; and therefore it is not neceſſary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deſervedly be admired in any other performance.

To these proofs of his genius may be added, from the ſame poem, an inſtance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not ſo often diſtinguiſhed; he does not forget to remind the king, in the moſt delicate and artful manner, of continuing his penſion.

With regard to the ſucceſs of his addreſs, he was for ſome time in ſuſpence, but was in no great degree ſolicitous about it; and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend who had for a conſiderable time ſupported him, removing his family to another place, took occaſion to diſmiſs him. It then became neceſſary to enquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reaſon to ſuſpect that no great favour was intended him, becauſe he had not received his penſion at the uſual time.

It is ſaid, that he did not take thoſe methods of retrieving his intereſt, which were moſt likely to ſucceed; and ſome of thoſe who were employed in the Exchequer, cautioned him againſt too much violence in his proceedings: but Mr. Savage, who ſeldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his paſſion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reaſon of the diſtinction that was made between him and the other penſioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughneſs which perhaps

determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accuſed or ſuſpected, and whatever influence was employed againſt him, he received ſoon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his penſion; and he had now no proſpect of ſubſiſtence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finiſh it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an eſtate and title by a particular law, expoſed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themſelves into eſteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever proſpects aroſe, were always intercepted as he began to approach them. The king's intentions in his favour were fruſtrated; his dedication to the prince, whoſe generoſity on every other occaſion was eminent, procured him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himſelf upon keeping his promiſe to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore, not only with decency, but with cheerfulneſs; nor was his gaiety clouded even by his laſt diſappointments, though he was in a ſhort time reduced to the loweſt degree of diſtreſs, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another inſtance of the inſurmountable obſtinacy of his ſpirit; his cloaths were worn out; and he received notice, that at a

coffee-houſe ſome cloaths and linen were left for him: the perſon who ſent them did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might ſpare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was ſo far generous, it was made with ſome neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage ſo much reſented, that he refuſed the preſent, and declined to enter the houſe till the cloaths that had been deſigned for him were taken away.

His diſtreſs was now publickly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert ſome meaſures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expreſſed his concern "for "the miſerable withdrawing of his penſion;" and gave him hopes, that in a ſhort time he ſhould find himſelf ſupplied with a competence, "without any "dependence on thoſe little creatures which we are "pleaſed to call the Great."

The ſcheme propoſed for this happy and independent ſubſiſtence was, that he ſhould retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raiſed by a ſubſcription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aſpiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from thoſe of his friends; for they propoſed that he ſhould continue an exile from London for ever, and ſpend all the remaining part of his life at Swanſea; but he deſigned only to take the opportunity, which their ſcheme offered him, of retreating for a ſhort time, that he might prepare his play for the ſtage, and his other works for the preſs, and then to return to London to exhi-

 bit

bit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his works, he propofed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application; and, when he had finifhed them, he defigned to do juftice to his fubfcribers, by publifhing them according to his propofals.

As he was ready to entertain himfelf with future pleafures, he had planned out a fcheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from paftorals and fongs. He imagined that he fhould be tranfported to fcenes of flowery felicity, like thofe which one poet has reflected to another; and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleafures, of which he fufpected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With thefe expectations he was fo enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for fubmitting to live upon a fubfcription, and advifed rather by a refolute exertion of his abilities to fupport himfelf, he could not bear to debar himfelf from the happinefs which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lofe the opportunity of liftening, without intermiffion, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happinefs of a country life.

While this fcheme was ripening, his friends directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be fecure from his creditors, and fent him every Monday a guinea which he commonly fpent before the next morning, and trufted,

after

after his ufual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of fortune.

He now began very fenfibly to feel the miferies of dependence. Thofe by whom he was to be fupported, began to prefcribe to him with an air of authority, which he knew not how decently to refent, nor patiently to bear; and he foon difcovered, from the conduct of moft of his fubfcribers, that he was yet in the hands of "little creatures."

Of the infolence that he was obliged to fuffer, he gave many inftances, of which none appeared to raife his indignation to a greater height, than the method which was taken of furnifhing him with cloaths. Inftead of confulting him, and allowing him to fend a tailor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they propofed to fend for a tailor to take his meafure, and then to confult how they fhould equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it fuch as Savage's humanity would have fuggefted to him on a like occafion; but it had fcarcely deferved mention, had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, fhewn the peculiarity of his character. Upon hearing the defign that was formed, he came to the lodging of a friend with the moft violent agonies of rage; and, being afked what it could be that gave him fuch difturbance, he replied with the utmoft vehemence of indignation, "That they had "fent for a tailor to meafure him."

How the affair ended was never enquired, for fear of renewing his uneafinefs. It is probable that, upon recollection, he fubmitted with a good grace to what

what he could not avoid, and that he discovered no resentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and universal compliance; for when the gentleman, who had first informed him of the design to support him by a subscription, attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the measures that were proposed.

A letter was written for him * to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpose his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he solicited Sir William's assistance "for a man who really needed it as "much as any man could well do;" and informed him, that he was retiring "for ever to a place where "he should no more trouble his relations, friends, "or enemies;" he confessed, that his passion had betrayed him to some conduct, with regard to Lord Tyrconnel, for which he could not but heartily ask his pardon; and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's passion might be yet so high, that he would not "receive a letter from him," begged that Sir William would endeavour to soften him; and expressed his hopes that he would comply with this request, and that "so small a relation would not harden his "heart against him."

That any man should presume to dictate a letter to him, was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage; and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it. But when he read it, he found it contained sentiments entirely opposite to

* By Mr. Pope. Dr. J.

his own, and, as he afferted, to the truth; and therefore, inftead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of mafculine refentment and warm expoftulations. He very juftly obferved, that the ftyle was too fupplicatory, and the reprefentation too abject, and that he ought at leaft to have made him complain with "the dignity of a gentleman in "diftrefs." He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to afk Lord Tyrconnel's pardon; for, "he defpifed his pardon, and "therefore could not heartily, and would not hypo-"critically, afk it." He remarked that his friend made a very unreafonable diftinction between himfelf and him; for, fays he, "when you mention men of "high rank in your own character," they are "thofe "little creatures whom we are pleafed to call the "Great;" but when you addrefs them "in mine," no fervility is fufficiently humble. He then with great propriety explained the ill confequences which might be expected from fuch a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full anfwer to all that he fhould allege againft them; for he always intended to publifh a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reafons, and agreed that it ought to be fuppreffed.

After many alterations and delays, a fubfcription was at length raifed, which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman *; fuch was the generofity of mankind, that

* Mr. Pope. R.

what

what had been done by a player without ſolicitation, could not now be effected by application and intereſt; and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a penſion leſs than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any ſervilities.

Mr. Savage, however, was ſatisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though ſcanty, would be more than ſufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid œconomiſt, and to live according to the exact rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man, who, when he knew his income, exceeded it; and yet he confeſſed, that inſtances of ſuch folly were too common, and lamented that ſome men were not to be truſted with their own money.

Full of theſe ſalutary reſolutions, he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderneſs of his friends, and parted from the author of this narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furniſhed with fifteen guineas, and informed, that they would be ſufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his ſupport in Wales for ſome time; and that there remained but little more of the firſt collection. He promiſed a ſtrict adherence to his maxims of parſimony, and went away in the ſtage-coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him till he informed them of his arrival at Swanſea.

But when they leaſt expected, arrived a letter dated the fourteenth day after his departure, in which he ſent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then ſent him the money that was in their hands, with

which

which he was enabled to reach Briſtol, from whence he was to go to Swanſea by water.

At Briſtol he found an embargo laid upon the ſhipping, ſo that he could not immediately obtain a paſſage; and being therefore obliged to ſtay there ſome time, he with his uſual felicity ingratiated himſelf with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houſes, diſtinguiſhed at their publick feaſts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore eaſily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them ſo much by his letters, that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed, that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a year, which were allowed him by the gentleman who propoſed the ſubſcription.

After ſome ſtay at Briſtol he retired to Swanſea, the place originally propoſed for his reſidence, where he lived about a year, very much diſſatisfied with the diminution of his ſalary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with thoſe who were moſt diſtinguiſhed in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel and Mrs. Jones, by ſome verſes which he inſerted in "The Gentleman's "Magazine *."

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London; and was deſirous of coming to town, to bring it upon the ſtage. This deſign was very warmly oppoſed; and he was ad-

* Reprinted in the late Collection.

viſed,

vifed, by his chief benefactor, to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomfon and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the ftage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual penfion fhould be paid him.

This propofal he rejected with the utmoft contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgement of thofe, to whom he was required to fubmit, was fuperior to his own. He was now determined, as he expreffed it, to be "no longer kept in leading-"ftrings," and had no elevated idea of "his bounty, "who propofed to penfion him out of the profits of "his own labours."

He attempted in Wales to promote a fubfcription for his works, and had once hopes of fuccefs; but in a fhort time afterwards formed a refolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reafonable to be confined, for the gratification of thofe, who, having promifed him a liberal income, had no fooner banifhed him to a remote corner, than they reduced his allowance to a falary fcarcely equal to the neceffities of life.

His refentment of the treatment, which, in his own opinion at leaft, he had not deferved, was fuch, that he broke off all correfpondence with moft of his contributors, and appeared to confider them as perfecutors and oppreffors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct toward him fince his departure from London "had been perfidiouf-"nefs improving on perfidioufnefs, and inhumanity "on inhumanity."

It is not to be fuppofed, that the neceffities of Mr. Savage did not fometimes incite him to fatirical

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exaggerations of the behaviour of thoſe by whom he thought himſelf reduced to them. But it muſt be granted, that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardſhip, and that thoſe who withdrew their ſubſcription from a man, who, upon the faith of their promiſe, had gone into a kind of baniſhment, and abandoned all thoſe by whom he had been before relieved in his diſtreſſes, will find it no eaſy taſk to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alleged, and perhaps juſtly, that he was petulant and contemptuous; that he more frequently reproached his ſubſcribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered, that his conduct, and this is the worſt charge that can be drawn up againſt him, did them no real injury, and that it therefore ought rather to have been pitied than reſented; at leaſt, the reſentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deſerve that ſtarves the man whom he has perſuaded to put himſelf into his power.

It might have been reaſonably demanded by Savage, that they ſhould, before they had taken away what they promiſed, have replaced him in his former ſtate, that they ſhould have taken no advantages from the ſituation to which the appearance of their kindneſs had reduced him, and that he ſhould have been recalled to London before he was abandoned. He might juſtly repreſent, that he ought to have been conſidered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be releaſed before the dogs ſhould be looſed upon him.

He

He endeavoured, indeed, to releafe himfelf, and, with an intent to return to London, went to Briftol, where a repetition of the kindnefs which he had formerly found, invited him to ftay. He was not only careffed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty-pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not fuffer him to confider, that fuch proofs of kindnefs were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably, be every day lefs; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generofity was exhaufted, and officioufnefs wearied.

Another part of his mifconduct was the practice of prolonging his vifits to unfeafonable hours, and difconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce, which all the charms of his converfation could not compenfate; for what trader would purchafe fuch airy fatisfaction by the lofs of folid gain, which muft be the confequence of midnight merriment, as thofe hours which were gained at night were generally loft in the morning?

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curiofity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreafing, perhaps without fufpecting for what reafon their conduct was altered; for he ftill continued to harafs, with his nocturnal intrufions, thofe that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houfes.

But

But he did not ſpend all the time of his reſidence at Briſtol in viſits or at taverns, for he ſometimes returned to his ſtudies, and began ſeveral conſiderable deſigns. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obſcure part of the ſuburbs, till he found himſelf again deſirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of abſence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his deſign of returning to London, to bring his tragedy upon the ſtage; but, having neglected to depart with the money that was raiſed for him, he could not afterwards procure a ſum ſufficient to defray the expences of his journey; nor perhaps would a freſh ſupply have had any other effect than, by putting immediate pleaſures into his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus ſpending the day in contriving a ſcheme for the morrow, diſtreſs ſtole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied ſome of thoſe who were at firſt enamoured of his converſation; but he might, perhaps, ſtill have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal ſucceſs, had not the decay of his cloaths made it no longer conſiſtent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to aſſociate with him in publick places. He now began to find every man from home at whoſe houſe he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the neceſſaries of life, but wandered about the town, ſlighted and neglected, in queſt of a dinner, which he did not always obtain.

To complete his mifery, he was purfued by the officers for fmall debts which he had contracted; and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the fmall number of friends from whom he had ftill reafon to hope for favours. His cuftom was to lie in bed the greateft part of the day, and to get out in the dark with the utmoft privacy, and, after having paid his vifit, return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obfcure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he fuffered the utmoft extremities of poverty, and often fafted fo long that he was feized with faintnefs, and had loft his appetite, not being able to bear the fmell of meat, till the action of his ftomach was reftored by a cordial.

In this diftrefs, he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himfelf a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily fpent his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Briftol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who fheltered him in his houfe, though at the ufual inconveniences with which his company was attended; for he could neither be perfuaded to go to bed in the night, nor to rife in the day.

It is obfervable, that in thefe various fcenes of mifery he was always difengaged and cheerful: he at fome times purfued his ftudies, and at others continued or enlarged his epiftolary correfpondence; nor was he ever fo far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increafe of his allowance by any other methods than accufations and reproaches.

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He had now no longer any hopes of affiftance from his friends at Briftol, who as merchants, and by confequence fufficiently ftudious of profit, cannot be fuppofed to have looked with much compaffion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of fuch confequence as neglect of œconomy. It is natural to imagine, that many of thofe, who would have relieved his real wants, were difcouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by obfervation of the ufe which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and that the fame neceffity would quickly return,

At laft he quitted the houfe of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, ftill intending to fet out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at fupper with two of his friends, he was at his return to his lodgings arrefted for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-houfe, and conducted to the houfe of a fheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen with whom he had fupped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

" It was not a little unfortunate for me, that I " fpent yefterday's evening with you; becaufe the " hour hindered me from entering on my new lodg- " ing; however, I have now got one, but fuch an " one as I believe nobody would chufe.

" I was arrefted at the fuit of Mrs. Read, juft as " I was going up ftairs to bed, at Mr. Bowyer's; " but taken in fo private a manner, that I believe " nobody at the White Lion is apprifed of it: though

"I let the officers know the ſtrength, or rather weak-"neſs, of my pocket, yet they treated me with the "utmoſt civility; and even when they conducted me "to confinement, it was in ſuch a manner, that I "verily believe I could have eſcaped, which I would "rather be ruined than have done, notwithſtanding "the whole amount of my finances was but three "pence halfpenny.

"In the firſt place, I muſt inſiſt, that you will in-"duſtriouſly conceal this from Mrs. S——s, becauſe "I would not have her good-nature ſuffer that pain, "which, I know, ſhe would be apt to feel on this "occaſion.

"Next, I conjure you, dear Sir, by all the ties of "friendſhip, by no means to have one uneaſy thought "on my account; but to have the ſame pleaſantry "of countenance, and unruffled ſerenity of mind, "which (God be praiſed!) I have in this, and have "had in a much ſeverer calamity. Furthermore, I "charge you, if you value my friendſhip as truly as "I do yours, not to utter, or even harbour, the leaſt "reſentment againſt Mrs. Read. I believe ſhe has "ruined me, but I freely forgive her; and (though "I will never more have any intimacy with her) I "would, at a due diſtance, rather do her an act of "good, than ill will. Laſtly, (pardon the expreſ-"ſion,) I abſolutely command you not to offer me "any pecuniary aſſiſtance, nor to attempt getting "me any from any one of your friends. At another "time, or on any other occaſion, you may, dear "friend, be well aſſured, I would rather write to "you in the ſubmiſſive ſtyle of a requeſt, than that "of a peremptory command.

" However, that my truly valuable friend may not
" think I am too proud to aſk a favour, let me in-
" treat you to let me have your boy to attend me
" for this day, not only for the ſake of ſaving me the
" expence of porters, but for the delivery of ſome
" letters to people whoſe names I would not have
" known to ſtrangers.

" The civil treatment I have thus far met from
" thoſe whoſe priſoner I am, makes me thankful to
" the Almighty, that though he has thought fit to
" viſit me (on my birth-night) with affliction, yet
" (ſuch is his great goodneſs!) my affliction is not
" without alleviating circumſtances. I murmur not;
" but am all reſignation to the divine will. As to
" the world, I hope that I ſhall be endued by Heaven
" with that preſence of mind, that ſerene dignity in
" misfortune, that conſtitutes the character of a true
" nobleman; a dignity far beyond that of coronets;
" a nobility ariſing from the juſt principles of phi-
" loſophy, refined and exalted by thoſe of chriſtia-
" nity."

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he ſhould be able to procure bail, and avoid the neceſſity of going to priſon. The ſtate in which he paſſed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very juſtly expreſſed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend: " The whole day," ſays he,
" has been employed in various people's filling my
" head with their fooliſh chimerical ſyſtems, which
" has obliged me coolly (as far as nature will admit)
" to digeſt, and accommodate myſelf to every dif-
" ferent perſon's way of thinking; hurried from one
" wild ſyſtem to another, till it has quite made a

"chaos of my imagination, and nothing done—
"promifed—difappointed—ordered to fend, every
"hour, from one part of the town to the other."

When his friends, who had hitherto careffed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the fame, they all refufed to preferve him from a prifon at the expence of eight pounds; and therefore, after having been for fome time at the officer's houfe "at an immenfe expence," as he obferves in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expence he was enabled to fupport by the generofity of Mr. Nafh at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately fent him five guineas, and promifed to promote his fubfcription at Bath with all his intereft.

By his removal to Newgate, he obtained at leaft a freedom from fufpence, and reft from the difturbing viciffitudes of hope and difappointment: he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to fhare his gaiety, but not to partake of his misfortunes; and therefore he no longer expected any affiftance from them.

It muft, however, be obferved of one gentleman, that he offered to releafe him by paying the debt; but that Mr. Savage would not confent, I fuppofe, becaufe he thought he had before been too burthenfome to him.

He was offered by fome of his friends that a collection fhould be made for his enlargement; but he "treated the propofal," and declared * "he fhould

* In a letter after his confinement. Dr. J.

"again

"again treat it, with difdain. As to writing any "mendicant letters, he had too high a fpirit, and de- "termined only to write to fome minifters of ftate, "to try to regain his penfion."

He continued to complain * of thofe that had fent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had "loft the profits of his play, which had been "finifhed three years; and in another letter declares his refolution to publifh a pamphlet, that the world might know how "he had been ufed."

This pamphlet was never written; for he in a very fhort time recovered his ufual tranquillity, and cheerfully applied himfelf to more inoffenfive ftudies. He indeed fteadily declared, that he was promifed a yearly allowance of fifty pounds, and never received half the fum; but he feemed to refign himfelf to that as well as to other misfortunes, and lofe the remembrance of it in his amufements and employments.

The cheerfulnefs with which he bore his confinement appears from the following letter, which he wrote January the 30th, to one of his friends in London.

"I now write to you from my confinement in "Newgate, where I have been ever fince Monday "laft was fe'nnight, and where I enjoy myfelf with "much more tranquillity than I have known for up- "wards of a twelvemonth paft; having a room en- "tirely to myfelf, and purfuing the amufement of "my poetical ftudies, uninterrupted, and agreeable "to my mind. I thank the Almighty, I am now "all collected in myfelf; and, though my perfon is

* Letter, Jan. 15.

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"in confinement, my mind can expatiate on ample "and ufeful fubjects with all the freedom imaginable. I am now more converfant with the Nine than "ever, and if, inftead of a Newgate-bird, I may be "allowed to be a bird of the Mufes, I affure you, "Sir, I fing very freely in my cage; fometimes in-"deed in the plaintive notes of the nightingale; but "at others, in the cheerful ftrains of the lark."

In another letter he obferves, that he ranges from one fubject to another, without confining himfelf to any particular tafk; and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deferves, at leaft, to be mentioned with applaufe; and, whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of fuffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, conftituted a wife man, are thofe of bearing and forbearing, which it cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally poffeffed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practife the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagge, the keeper of the prifon, with great humanity; was fupported by him at his own table, without any certainty of recompence; had a room to himfelf, to which he could at any time retire from all difturbance; was allowed to ftand at the door of the prifon, and fometimes taken out into the fields *; fo that he fuffered fewer hardfhips in prifon than he had been accuftomed to undergo in the greateft part of his life.

* See this confirmed, Gent. Mag vol. LVII. 1140. N.

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The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made ſome overtures to the creditor for his releaſe, though without effect; and continued, during the whole time of his impriſonment, to treat him with the utmoſt tenderneſs and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly moſt laudable in that ſtate which makes it moſt difficult; and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deſerves this public atteſtation; and the man, whoſe heart has not been hardened by ſuch an employment, may be juſtly propoſed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inſcription was once engraved "to the honeſt toll-gatherer," leſs honours ought not to be paid "to the tender "gaoler."

Mr. Savage very frequently received viſits, and ſometimes preſents, from his acquaintances; but they did not amount to a ſubſiſtence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generoſity of this keeper; but theſe favours, however they might endear to him the particular perſons from whom he received them, were very far from impreſſing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Briſtol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himſelf in priſon, than in writing a poem called "London and Briſtol delineated *."

When he had brought this poem to its preſent ſtate, which, without conſidering the chaſm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his

* The Author preferred this title to that of "London and "Briſtol compared;" which, when he began the piece, he intended to prefix to it. Dr. J.

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deſign, and informed his friend *, that he was determined to print it with his name; but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Briſtol acquaintance. The gentleman, ſurpriſed at his reſolution, endeavoured to diſſuade him from publiſhing it, at leaſt from prefixing his name; and declared, that he could not reconcile the injunction of ſecrecy with his reſolution to own it at its firſt appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an anſwer agreeable to his character, in the following terms:

"I received yours this morning; and not without "a little ſurpriſe at the contents. To anſwer a queſ-"tion with a queſtion, you aſk me concerning Lon-"don and Briſtol, why will I add *delineated?* Why "did Mr. Woolaſton add the ſame word to his RE-"LIGION OF NATURE? I ſuppoſe that it was his will "and pleaſure to add it in his caſe; and it is mine "to do ſo in my own. You are pleaſed to tell me, "that you underſtand not why ſecrecy is enjoined, "and yet I intend to ſet my name to it. My anſwer "is—I have my private reaſons, which I am not ob-"liged to explain to any one. You doubt my friend "Mr. S—— † would not approve of it—And what "is it to me whether he does or not? Do you imagine "that Mr. S—— is to dictate to me? If any man "who calls himſelf my friend ſhould aſſume ſuch an "air, I would ſpurn at his friendſhip with contempt. "You ſay, I ſeem to think ſo by not letting him "know it—And ſuppoſe I do, what then? Perhaps "I can give reaſons for that diſapprobation, very fo-"reign from what you would imagine. You go on

* This friend was Mr. Cave the printer.
† Mr. Strong, of the Poſt-office. N.

"in ſaying, Suppoſe I ſhould not put my name to "it—My anſwer is, that I will not ſuppoſe any ſuch "thing, being determined to the contrary: neither, "Sir, would I have you ſuppoſe, that I applied to "you for want of another preſs: nor would I have "you imagine, that I owe Mr. S—— obligations "which I do not."

Such was his imprudence, and ſuch his obſtinate adherence to his own reſolutions, however abſurd! A priſoner! ſupported by charity! and, whatever inſults he might have received during the latter part of his ſtay at Briſtol, once careſſed, eſteemed and preſented with a liberal collection, he could forget on a ſudden his danger and his obligations, to gratify the petulance of his wit, or the eagerneſs of his reſentment, and publiſh a ſatire, by which he might reaſonably expect that he ſhould alienate thoſe who then ſupported him, and provoke thoſe whom he could neither reſiſt nor eſcape.

This reſolution, from the execution of which it is probable that only his death could have hindered him, is ſufficient to ſhew, how much he diſregarded all conſiderations that oppoſed his preſent paſſions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it; nor had oppoſition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was however laid aſide, while he was employed in ſoliciting aſſiſtance from ſeveral great perſons; and one interruption ſucceeding another, hindered him from ſupplying the chaſm, and perhaps from

from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finiſhed in his own opinion; for it is very unequal, and ſome of the lines are rather inſerted to rhyme to others, than to ſupport or improve the ſenſe; but the firſt and laſt parts are worked up with great ſpirit and elegance.

His time was ſpent in the priſon for the moſt part in ſtudy, or in receiving viſits; but ſometimes he deſcended to lower amuſements, and diverted himſelf in the kitchen with the converſation of the criminals; for it was not pleaſing to him to be much without company; and, though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the firſt that offered; for this he was ſometimes reproved by his friends, who found him ſurrounded with felons: but the reproof was on that, as on other occaſions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himſelf, and to ſet very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other ſcene of his life, he made uſe of ſuch opportunities as occurred of benefiting thoſe who were more miſerable than himſelf, and was always ready to perform any office of humanity to his fellow-priſoners.

He had now ceaſed from correſponding with any of his ſubſcribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a year which he had promiſed him, and by whom it was expected that he would have been in a very ſhort time enlarged, becauſe he had directed the keeper to enquire after the ſtate of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court *, that the creditor might

* See Gent. Mag. vol. LVII. 1040.

be

be obliged to make him ſome allowance, if he was continued a priſoner, and, when on that occaſion he appeared in the hall, was treated with very unuſual reſpect.

But the reſentment of the city was afterwards raiſed by ſome accounts that had been ſpread of the ſatire; and he was informed that ſome of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a priſoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace; and perhaps might have haſtened the publication, only to ſhew how much he was ſuperior to their inſults, had not all his ſchemes been ſuddenly deſtroyed.

When he had been ſix months in priſon, he received from one of his friends *, in whoſe kindneſs he had the greateſt confidence, and on whoſe aſſiſtance he chiefly depended, a letter, that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in ſuch terms as ſudden reſentment dictated. Henley, in one of his advertiſements, had mentioned "Pope's treatment "of Savage." This was ſuppoſed by Pope to be the conſequence of a complaint made by Savage to Henley, and was therefore mentioned by him with much reſentment. Mr. Savage returned a very ſolemn proteſtation of his innocence, but however appeared much diſturbed at the accuſation. Some days afterwards he was ſeized with a pain in his back and ſide, which, as it was not violent, was not ſuſpected to be dangerous; but growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himſelf to his

* Mr. Pope. See ſome extracts of letters from that gentleman to and concerning Mr. Savage, in Ruffhead's Life of Pope, p. 502. R.

room,

room, and a fever ſeized his ſpirits. The ſymptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any aſſiſtance. The laſt time that the keeper ſaw him was on July the 31ſt, 1743; when Savage, ſeeing him at his bed ſide, ſaid, with an uncommon earneſtneſs, "I have ſomething to ſay to you, Sir;" but, after a pauſe, moved his hand in a melancholy manner; and, finding himſelf unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, ſaid, "'Tis gone!" The keeper ſoon after left him; and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally diſtinguiſhed by his virtues and vices; and at once remarkable for his weakneſſes and abilities.

He was of a middle ſtature, of a thin habit of body, a long viſage, coarſe features, and melancholy aſpect; of a grave and manly deportment, a ſolemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, ſoftened into an engaging eaſineſs of manners. His walk was ſlow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was eaſily excited to ſmiles, but very ſeldom provoked to laughter.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgement was accurate, his apprehenſion quick, and his memory ſo tenacious, that he was frequently obſerved to know what he had learned from others, in a ſhort time, better than thoſe by whom he was informed; and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumſtances, which few would have regarded at the preſent

ſent time, but which the quickneſs of his apprehenſion impreſſed upon him. He had the art of eſcaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himſelf to every new ſcene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the ſmall time which he ſpent in viſible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in curſory converſation with the ſame ſteadineſs of attention as others apply to a lecture; and amidſt the appearance of thoughtleſs gaiety, loſt no new idea that was ſtarted, nor any hint that could be improved. He had therefore made in coffee-houſes the ſame proficiency as others in their cloſets: and it is remarkable, that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning ſcarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obſcures as embelliſhes them.

His judgement was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment; and it is not without ſome ſatisfaction, that I can produce the ſuffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain ſuch odious ideas as ſome who perhaps had neither his judgement nor experience, have publiſhed, either in oſtentation of their ſagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for converſation, of which he knew how to practiſe all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modeſt and eaſy, open and reſpectful; his language was vivacious or elegant, and equally happy upon grave and humorous ſubjects. He was generally

rally cenſured for not knowing when to retire; but that was not the defect of his judgement, but of his fortune: when he left his company, he was frequently to ſpend the remaining part of the night in the ſtreet, or at leaſt was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not ſtrange that he delayed as long as he could; and ſometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himſelf.

It cannot be ſaid, that he made uſe of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct; an irregular and diſſipated manner of life had made him the ſlave of every paſſion that happened to be excited by the preſence of its object, and that ſlavery to his paſſions reciprocally produced a life irregular and diſſipated. He was not maſter of his own motions, nor could promiſe any thing for the next day.

With regard to his œconomy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life. He appeared to think himſelf born to be ſupported by others, and diſpenſed from all neceſſity of providing for himſelf; he therefore never proſecuted any ſcheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to ſecure the profits which his writings might have afforded him. His temper was, in conſequence of the dominion of his paſſions, uncertain and capricious; he was eaſily engaged, and eaſily diſguſted; but he is accuſed of retaining his hatred more tenaciouſly than his benevolence.

He was compaſſionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked (and very ſmall offences were ſufficient to provoke him), he would proſecute

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his revenge with the utmoſt acrimony till his paſſion had ſubſided.

His friendſhip was therefore of little value; for though he was zealous in the ſupport or vindication of thoſe whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to truſt him, becauſe he conſidered himſelf as diſcharged by the firſt quarrel from all ties of honour and gratitude; and would betray thoſe ſecrets which in the warmth of confidence had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him an univerſal accuſation of ingratitude: nor can it be denied that he was very ready to ſet himſelf free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to conceive himſelf in a ſtate of dependence, his pride being equally powerful with his other paſſions, and appearing in the form of inſolence at one time, and of vanity at another. Vanity, the moſt innocent ſpecies of pride, was moſt frequently predominant: he could not eaſily leave off, when he had once begun to mention himſelf or his works; nor ever read his verſes without ſtealing his eyes from the page, to diſcover in the faces of his audience, how they were affected with any favourite paſſage.

A kinder name than that of vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to ſeparate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praiſe to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been ſuggeſted or amended; and was ſo accurate, as to relate that he owed *three words* in "The Wanderer" to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was queſtioned, but with little reaſon; his accounts, though not indeed always the ſame, were generally conſiſtent. When he loved any man, he ſuppreſſed all his faults: and, when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues: but his characters were generally true, ſo far as he proceeded; though it cannot be denied, that his partiality might have ſometimes the effect of falſehood.

In caſes indifferent, he was zealous for virtue, truth, and juſtice: he knew very well the neceſſity of goodneſs to the preſent and future happineſs of mankind; nor is there perhaps any writer, who has leſs endeavoured to pleaſe by flattering the appetites, or perverting the judgement.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceaſes to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had reſolved to ſuppreſs be excepted, he has very little to fear from the ſtricteſt moral or religious cenſure. And though he may not be altogether ſecure againſt the objections of the critic, it muſt however be acknowledged, that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical; and, what many writers who have been more laviſhly applauded cannot boaſt, that they have an original air, which has no reſemblance of any foregoing writer, that the verſification and ſentiments have a caſt peculiar to themſelves, which no man can imitate with ſucceſs, becauſe what was nature in Savage would in another be affectation. It muſt be confeſſed, that his deſcriptions are ſtriking, his images animated, his fictions juſtly imagined, and his allegories artfully purſued; that his diction is elevated, though ſometimes forced, and his numbers ſonorous and majeſtick,

 though

though frequently ſluggiſh and encumbered. Of his ſtyle, the general fault is harſhneſs, and its general excellence is dignity; of his ſentiments, the prevailing beauty is ſimplicity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his writings, none, who candidly conſider his fortune, will think an apology either neceſſary or difficult. If he was not always ſufficiently inſtructed in his ſubject, his knowledge was at leaſt greater than could have been attained by others in the ſame ſtate. If his works were ſometimes unfiniſhed, accuracy cannot reaſonably be expected from a man oppreſſed with want, which he has no hope of relieving but by a ſpeedy publication. The inſolence and reſentment of which he is accuſed were not eaſily to be avoided by a great mind, irritated by perpetual hardſhips, and conſtrained hourly to return the ſpurns of contempt, and repreſs the inſolence of proſperity; and vanity ſurely may be readily pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praiſes, and the conſciouſneſs of deſerving them.

Thoſe are no proper judges of his conduct, who have ſlumbered away their time on the down of plenty; nor will any wiſe man eaſily preſume to ſay, "Had I been in Savage's condition, I ſhould have "lived or written better than Savage."

This relation will not be wholly without its uſe, if thoſe, who languiſh under any part of his ſufferings, ſhall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only thoſe afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or thoſe, who, in confidence of ſuperior capacities

or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, shall be reminded, that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL